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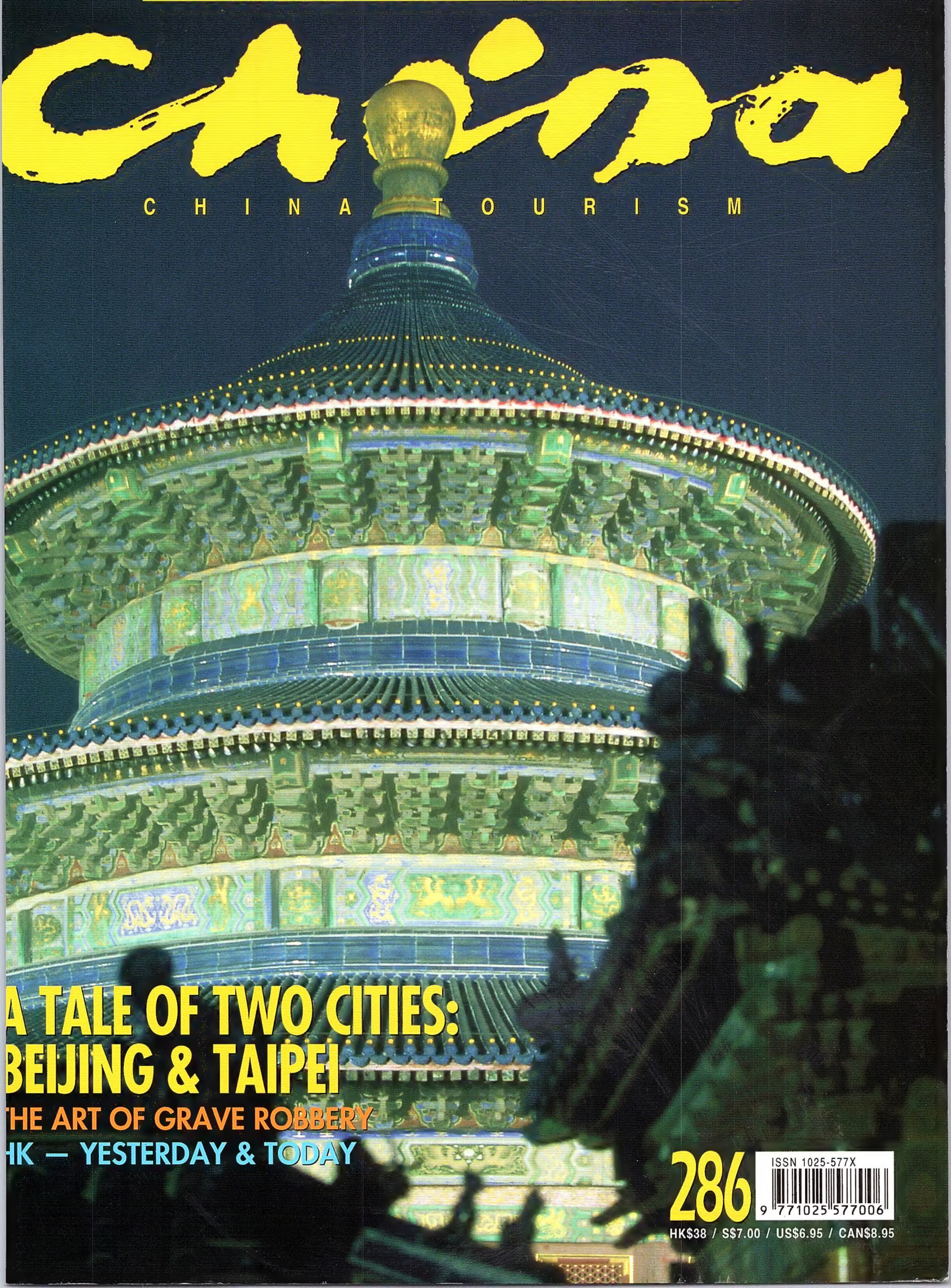

A TALE OF TWO CITIES: BEIJING & TAIPEI

THE ART OF GRAVE ROBBERY

HK — YESTERDAY & TODAY

286
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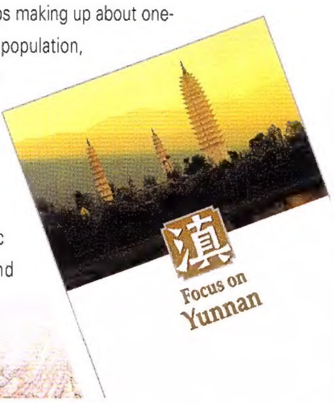
Focus on Yunnan

The mountainous wonderland of Yunnan enjoys a favourable warm climate year round. Its capital, Kunming, sitting alongside Yunnan's largest lake, Dianchi, has the honourable name of "Spring City". The province is full of natural wonders and cultural relics, such as the Stone Forests, the Shangri-La, and the ancient cities of Dali and Lijiang. With over 20 diverse ethnic groups making up about one-third of the population, opportunities abound for you to see their characteristic cultures and customs.



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Focus on Fujian

Situated on the southeast coast, Fujian Province overlooks Taiwan Island across the Taiwan Strait. Its mountainous landscape includes the Wuyi Mountain Scenic Area, one of the UN World Heritage sites in China. The province's zigzag coastlines, numerous beaches and charming seas offer spectacular scenic beauty as well as historical and cultural interest in such places as the Drumming Wave Islet in Xiamen and the Mazu Temple in Meizhou Island.

閩
Focus on Fujian

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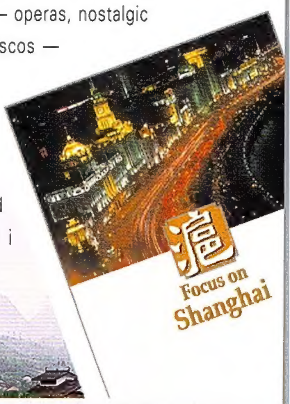
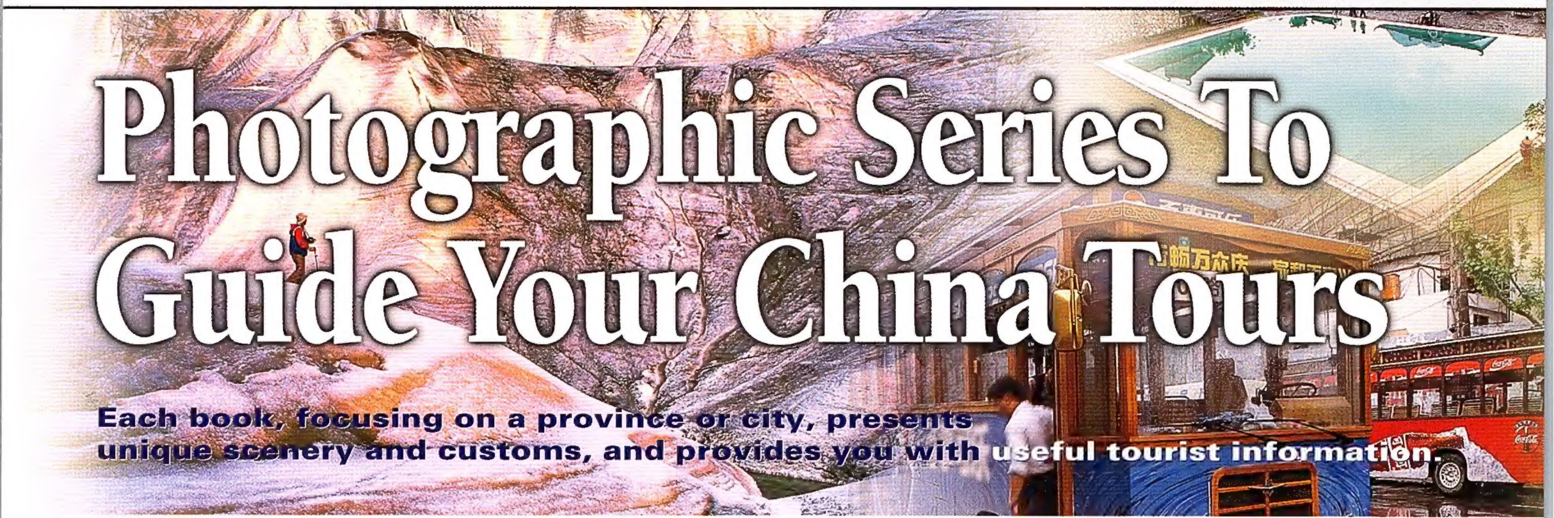
Focus on Shanghai

Shanghai, the largest metropolis in China, and formerly the Far East financial centre, has experienced dramatic development over the past century. The world-famous Bund along the Huangpu River shows you buildings of different historical periods and varied architectural styles, while skyscrapers are rising in the new area of Pudong. Shanghai's multiculturism is seen in its music — operas, nostalgic jazz and discos — and in the busy commercial district of Nanjing and Huaihai roads.





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Focus on Shaanxi

Shaanxi is the cradle of the Chinese civilisation and Xi'an was the capital of 13 dynasties. This has left Shaanxi a rich legacy of historical sites and cultural relics. In the provincial capital Xi'an, there is the fascinating terracotta army unearthed from the tomb of the First Emperor, Qin Shihuang; the tomb of Tang-dynasty Wu Zetian, China's first empress; and the stele forest. The province's beauty is capped with the sheer cliffs of Mount Huashan and the yellow earth of the Loess Plateau.

陝
Focus on Shaanxi

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Focus on Guangdong

An important gateway into China, the fertile Pearl River Delta of the southern province of Guangdong fans out from Guangzhou to the South China Sea and borders Hong Kong and Macao. The province's natural scenic spots include the limestone pinnacles of Zhaoqing's Seven Star Crags, the red sandstone of Danxia Mountain, and the volcanic beauty of Xiqiao Mountain. The capital, Guangzhou, offers plenty of history in its museums, temples, mosques and old colonial buildings.

粵
Focus on Guangdong

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Focus on Guizhou

Guizhou is a land of splendid natural scenery. Its towering mountains and karst landforms team up with the gurgling rivers and magnificent waterfalls to form a wonderful work of Mother Nature. Huangguoshu Waterfalls and the limestone caves are the province's most frequented scenic spots. The 17 ethnic groups living in the picturesque province further colour the land with vivid customs and joyous festivals. It is its natural beauty and culture that make Guizhou a perfect travel destination.

黔
Focus on Guizhou

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Focus on Tianjin

Tianjin, one of the four municipalities under direct Central Government administration, s an important industrial and commercial centre f China and the biggest port in the north. The istory of the city can be found in its Ancient Culture Street, 100-year-old Western-style uildings, Opera Museum and Mazu Temple. Besides the TV Tower and the Haihe River n the city, there are scenic spots in the outskirts, ncluding the Dule Temple and the Great Wall at Huangya Pass.

津
Focus on
Tianjin

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Focus on Xinjiang

On the vast land of Xinjiang in Northwest China, there are mountains, basins, deserts and lakes, which provide tourists with numerous attractions — ruins of ancient cities and tombs along the Silk Road; Turpan, an oasis in the desert; Kanas Lake, a gem imbedded in the Altay Mountains; Bayanbulak — the Swan Lake; and the world's second largest desert, the Taklimakan. The minority ethnic groups living in Xinjiang, such as the Uygur, Kazak, Mongolian, Uzbek, Tajik, Xibe, Kirgiz and Tatar, all have their own unique colourful culture.

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Focus on
Xinjiang

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Focus on Beijing

Beijing is a metropolis of everlasting charm. There are simply too many captivating things to see, to experience and to taste in this grand city with both old glamour and new mobility. There are historical sites such as the Palace Museum (the Forbidden City), the Temple of Heaven, the Summer Palace, and the Ming Tombs; there are also many scenic spots in its outskirts. Recently, tours have been organised for visitors to taste the real Beijing flavour of life — touring the small back lanes, having tea in a traditional-style teahouse and enjoying the Peking Opera.

京
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Beijing

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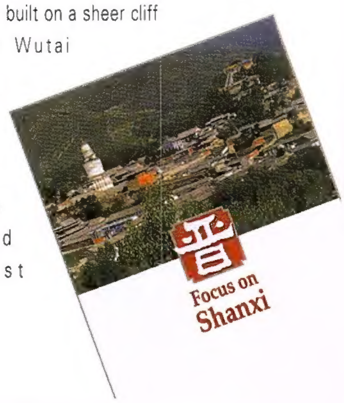
Focus on Shanxi

Shanxi Province, one of the irthplaces of the Chinese civilisation, has mpressive ancient architecture and a wealth of ell-preserved Buddhist temples, monasteries nd grottoes. Among the most famous are the ungang Grottoes containing some of China's ldest sculptures and Buddhist art, the Yongle alace, the Jinci Temple, the Hanging onastery built on a sheer cliff nd the Wutai ountain, ne of hina's ost amous acred uddhist ands.



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Focus on Guangxi

Unusual topography has endowed the province with numerous spectacular karst formations — limestone caves, pinnacles and rocks. The most famous and enchanting scenic spot is Guilin, and the most travelled route, on the Lijiang River from Guilin to Yangshuo. The coastal city of Beihai has the country's largest beach, the Silver Beach. Other attractions include the varied traditional customs of ethnic minorities, the Sino-Vietnamese border area, and the mysterious Huashan cliff paintings.

桂
Focus on
Guangxi

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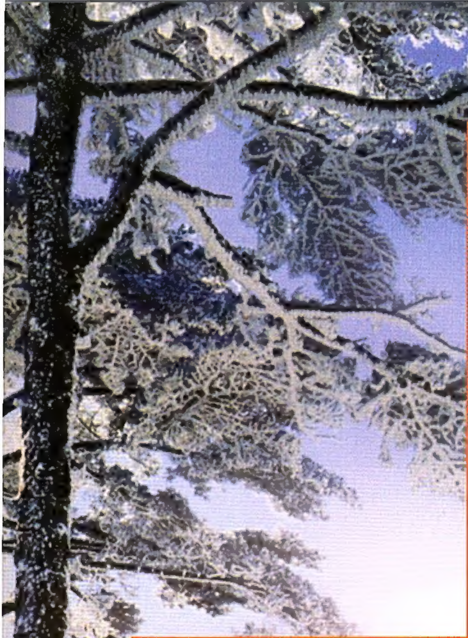
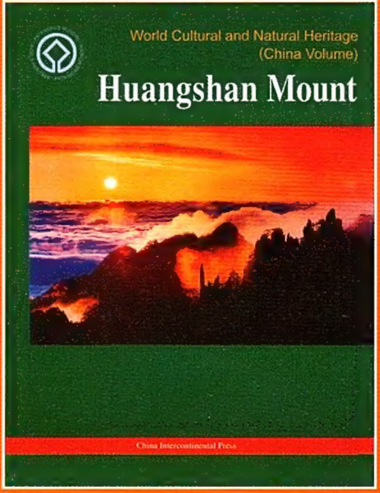


Mt. Huangshan, situated in the south of Anhui Province, is one of the most famous scenic areas in China. Being put into the World Heritage List, it is also granted with two laurels of cultural heritage and natural heritage by the UNESCO's World Heritage Commission.

The landscape of the mountain is a typical granite hoodoo landform shaped during the long geological periods by several tectonic movements in the crust. Mt. Huangshan has long been famous for its strange-looking pine trees, grotesque rocks, sea of clouds and hot springs.

All over one thousand metres above sea level, there are 77 peaks in the scenic area of almost two hundred square kilometres. Granite rock forests and rock columns together with massive rocks scatter everywhere. Moreover, Mt. Huangshan is a diverse ecosystem with a treasure of wildlife. There are approximately 1450 species of plants, 300 species of vertebrates and 170 species of birds.

Combined unique scenery and magnificent sea of clouds, the beauty of Mt. Huangshan has continued to fascinate endless visitors. Catch a glimpse of its glory in this "Huangshan Mount" pictorial that is filled with breath-taking images taken by our team of photographers!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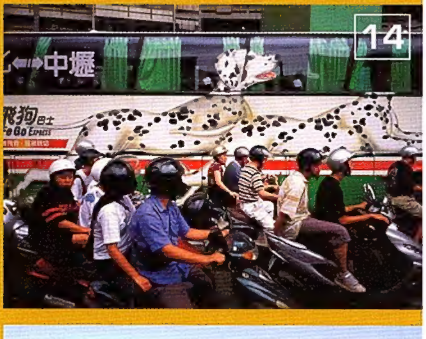

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A Tale of Two Cities: Beijing & Taipei

Photos are selected from the works of over a hundred photographers *Article by Li Jiangshu & Huang Liru*

Beijing and Taipei, the main administrative cities on both sides of the Taiwan Strait, have strikingly different characters and charms. Beijing is modest, historic and imperial, while Taipei youthful, trendy, yet more superstitious than anywhere else in China.

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52 Landscapes

Huping Mountain — The Roof of Hunan

Photos & Article by Shan Xiaogang

Huping (kettle and bottle) Mountain is about 100 km north of the well-known Zhangjiajie Scenic Area in Hunan Province. Since its main peak is the highest in the province, and therefore, it is often known as the "roof".

56 Discoveries

The Art of Grave Robbery

Photos by Qiu Ziyu & Shi Baoxiu *Article by Ding Ye*

The thousands-year-old ancient city of Xi'an has arisen endless imagination and curiosity of people. What's more, the precious relics and treasures left by the past emperors have also caught the attentions of burglars and thieves.

66 On the Way

Pools of Joy

Photos & Article by Dianna

Most people think of Hokkaido, Taipei or Zhuhai as the destinations for hotsprings, but these are hardly new territory. Why not go for a seductive soaks in Yunnan?

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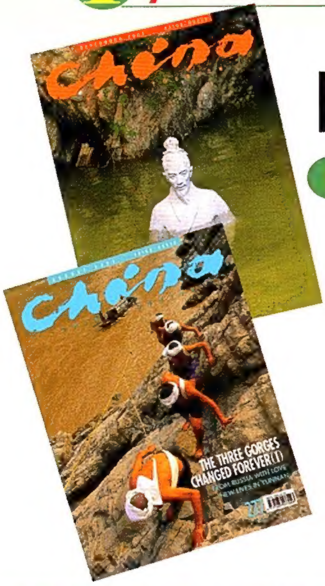
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An Alternative Way to Cross a River

Photos & Article by Huang Yanhong

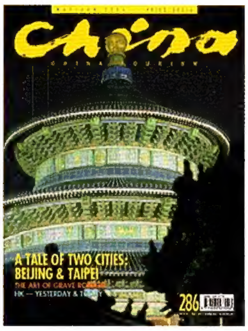
With no bridges to cross, people came up with the most primitive and innovative way to cross a river....

74 Photography

How to Take Picture-Postcard Shots?

Photos & Article by Chan Yat Nin

How many times have we been enchanted by spectacular scenes on a once-in-a-lifetime trip? However, the snapshots we took usually failed to live up to our actual experience. Landscape photography can be trickier than we think.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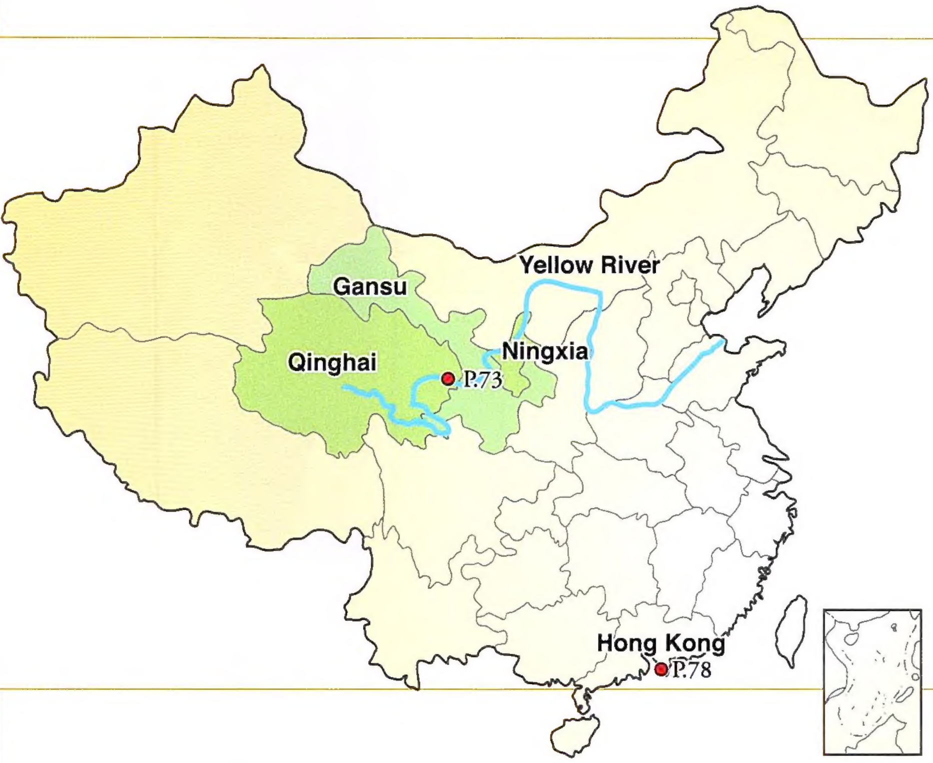
Temple of Heaven, Beijing
(by Jia Guorong)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HK — Yesterday & Today

Photos by Chan Yat Nin *Article by Maggie Lam*

Yellowish black and white pictures seem to have the magic to bring out nostalgic feelings in people. They even have the power to transform the most difficult past times into "good old days".

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China Tourism

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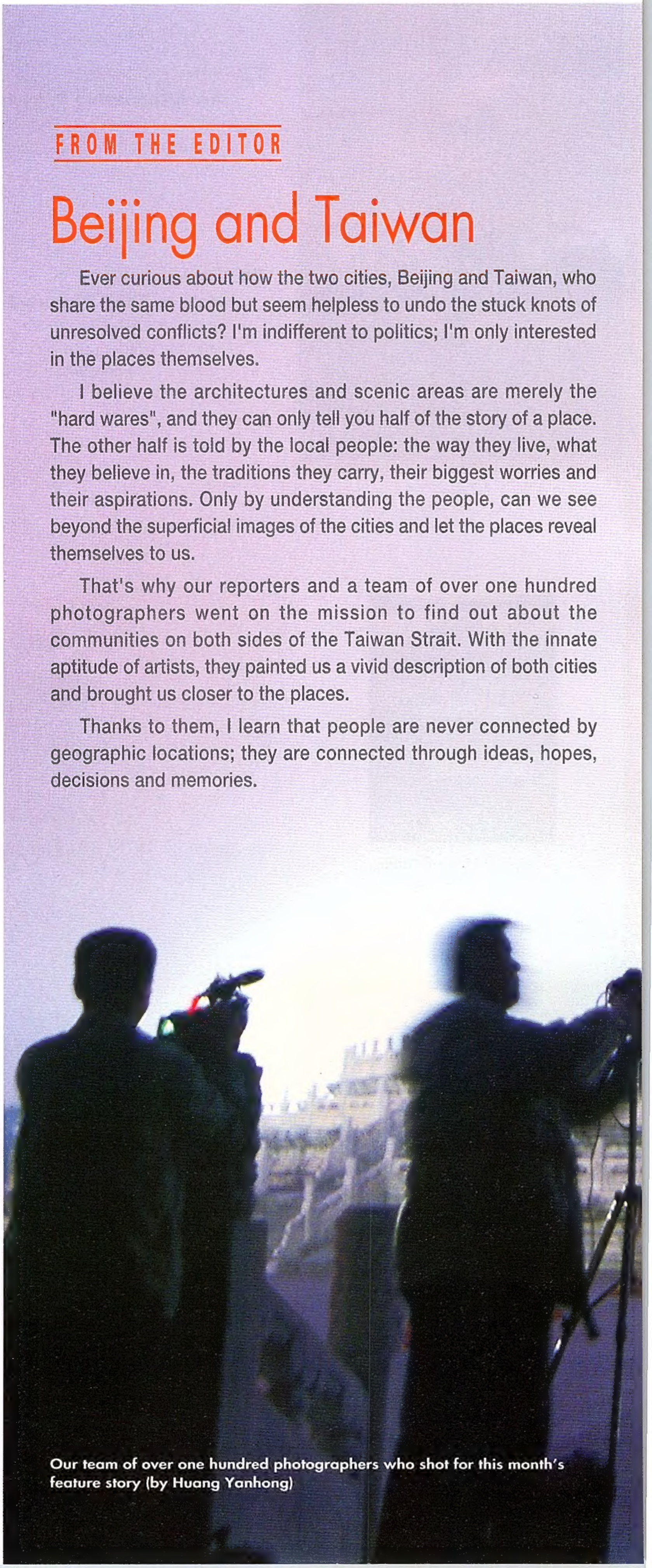


FROM THE EDITOR

Beijing and Taiwan

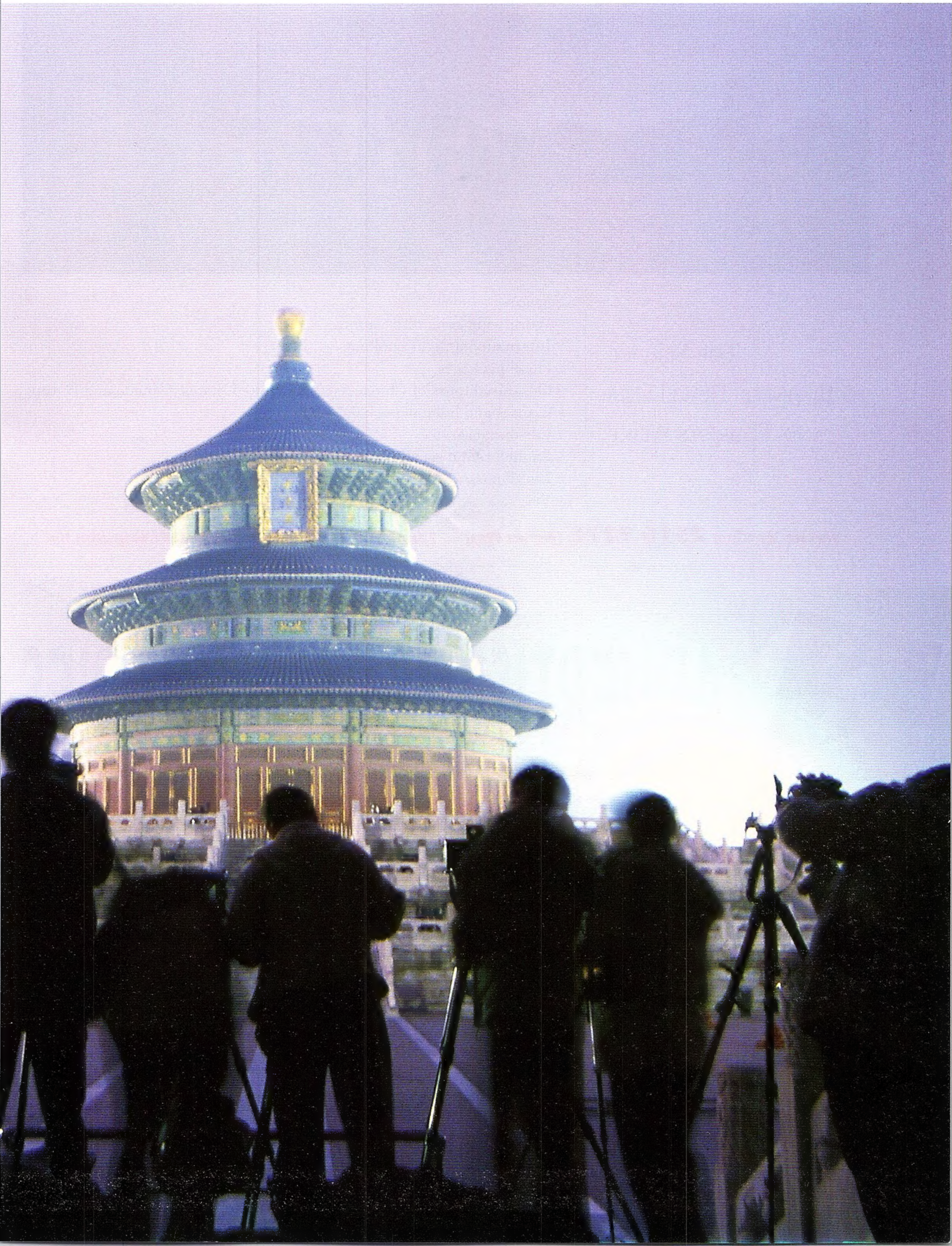
Ever curious about how the two cities, Beijing and Taiwan, who share the same blood but seem helpless to undo the stuck knots of unresolved conflicts? I'm indifferent to politics; I'm only interested in the places themselves.

I believe the architectures and scenic areas are merely the "hard wares", and they can only tell you half of the story of a place. The other half is told by the local people: the way they live, what they believe in, the traditions they carry, their biggest worries and their aspirations. Only by understanding the people, can we see beyond the superficial images of the cities and let the places reveal themselves to us.

That's why our reporters and a team of over one hundred photographers went on the mission to find out about the communities on both sides of the Taiwan Strait. With the innate aptitude of artists, they painted us a vivid description of both cities and brought us closer to the places.

Thanks to them, I learn that people are never connected by geographic locations; they are connected through ideas, hopes, decisions and memories.

Our team of over one hundred photographers who shot for this month's feature story (by Huang Yanhong)



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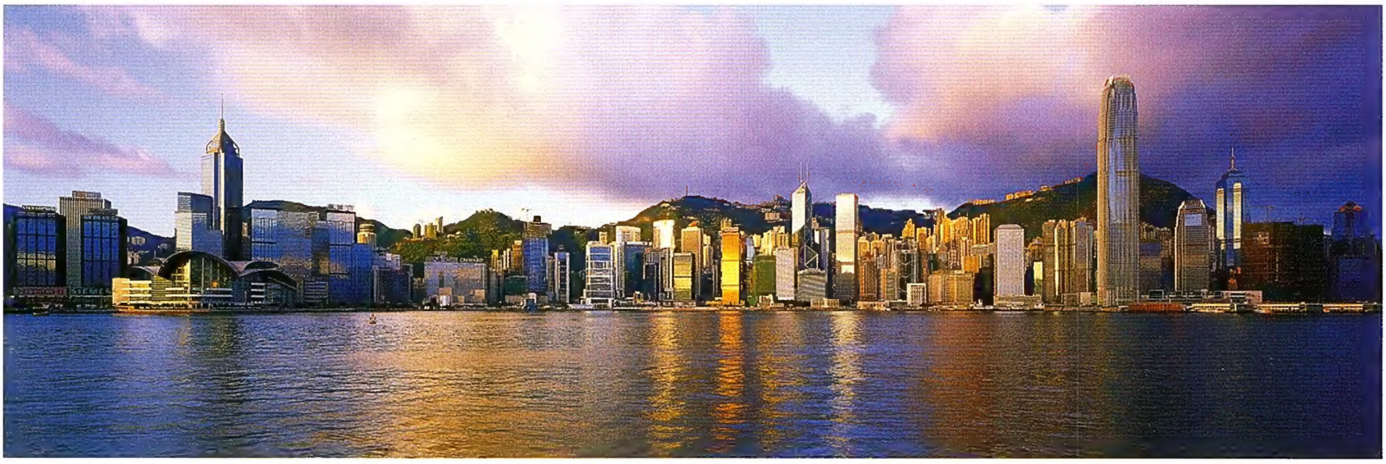

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MAY / JUNE

Jun to Jul
Daxing County, Beijing

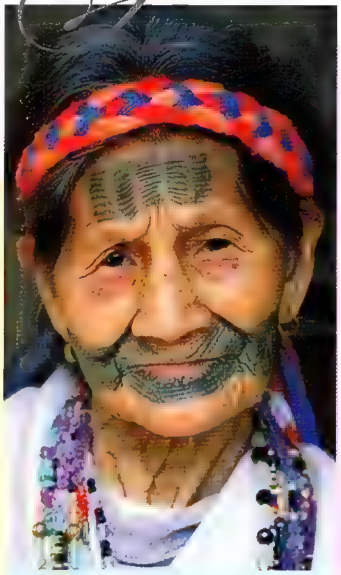
Tours of watermelon fields, watermelon-tasting events and folk performances are held during the **Daxing County Watermelon Festival**. This is a good chance for tourists to experience the country life and to visit the farmers' houses.

Jun 13
Jinhan Township, Hualien County, Taiwan

With the approach of harvest time, the ancestors of the Ami tribe would agree on a certain night when they would go to riverbanks and seashores to fish during the **Ami Fish-catching Festival**. They would then sacrifice their catch to the gods and perform rituals to ask the deities for a good harvest year. This practice has been passed down through the generations, and nowadays the Ami tribe would also hold a seafood feast together with the ceremony.

Jun
Orchid Island, Taitung County, Taiwan

At the start of the flying fish season every year, the Yami tribe launch their new boats with age-old ceremonies that solicit the gods for a good catch on the **Yami Boat-launching Festival**. Men wearing traditional loincloths and silver helmets would perform ceremonies while the women would swish their long tresses in the hair dance. After the rituals, the men would then row their unique and colourfully painted hand-made canoes into the sea to spear fish.



Jun
Nanao Township, Llan County, Taiwan

The Atayal is one of the 11 recognised aboriginal tribes in Taiwan. The **Atayal Harvest Festival** is the most important religious and cultural events when people pray for blessings. The people make use of unique musical instruments including bamboo flutes and mouth organs. Moreover, the millet wine and aborginal food also adds to the festive flavour.

Jun
Rueisuei, Hualien County, Taiwan

Winding along the East Rift Valley, the Siouguluan River cuts through the Coastal Mountain Range. The **International Siouguluan River Rafting Race** has been carried on here since the 1980s, and this is now Taiwan's premier rafting river. In June every year, rafters from all over the world come to participate in this major competition and test their skills along the 22-km stretch of the river from Rueisuei to Rainbow Bridge.

Jun 22
South Lake in Yueyang, Hunan Province

The Dragon Boat Festival is an event in commemoration of Qu Yuan, a great poet of the Warring States Period (475-221 B.C.). During the festival, people throughout the country hold dragon boat races, eat Zongzi (a pyramid-shaped dumpling made of glutinous rice wrapped in bamboo or reed leaves), drink realgar wines and hang Artemisia argyi (Chinese herbs used as air disinfectant) in the doorway.

This traditional tribute eventually turns into an annual international dragon boat race. There are over 20 teams from the United States, Canada, Australia and countries throughout South East Asia participate in the **Yueyang International Dragon Boat Race**.

Jun 24-26
Shicun Town, Lunan Yi Autonomous County, Chuxiong City of Chuxiong Yi Autonomous Prefecture, Yunnan Province

Enjoy the performances of the four-stringed plucked instrument with a round sound box and the reed-pipe wind instrument, and try the local Dasanxian dance during the **Torch Festival of the Yi Minority**. Other activities such as archery, horse races, bullfighting, wrestling and bonfire parties will also be held.

More Solo Mainland Tourists for HK

Beijing would lift travel restrictions for more mainland residents to visit Hong Kong.

Residents in up to eight cities of Jiangsu, Zhejiang and Fujian Provinces would be allowed to travel to Hong Kong on their own by the latter half of this year.

The new regulation has not yet extended to all the residents in the country, and most citizens must still first obtain business visas or travel in tour groups.

Happy Valley, HK

Digital Dunhuang Grottoes

China will invest 200 million yuan (about US $24 million) to build the digital Dunhuang Mogao Grottoes.

Dated back to 336 A.D., the world-famous Mogao Grottoes in Dunhuang are located in northwest China's Gansu Province. The grand grottoes went on the World Heritage List in 1987. Moreover, they are one of the three major Buddhist art treasures in China and the largest in terms of scale of all existing art collections in the world.

Dunhuang Museum, Gansu Province

HK SkyMart Officially Opened after Revamp

Hong Kong SkyMart officially opened in March after a 600-million-HK-dollars (US $77 million) renovation, bringing a whole new shopping, dining and leisure concept to attract more travellers to use HK International Airport (HKIA).

HKIA now has 160 shops, including 25 top-line brand names lining the 200-m boulevard in the East Hall, plus 40 restaurants catering to a variety of tastes and budgets. Top international brands are brought in to satisfy the shopping needs of high-speeding, brand-conscious customers from the Chinese mainland, Japan and South Korea.

High-speed Rail Connecting Guangzhou and Zhuhai

A high-speed railway connecting Guangzhou, the provincial capital, to Zhuhai Special Economic Zone, which borders Macao, will be built this year by South China's Guangdong Province. Construction of the 140-km track costs approximately 21 billion yuan (US $2.5 billion), and the project will be completed by 2007.

The project, which is expected to be extended to Macao in the future, will have 14 stations and link major cities and towns in the western part of the prosperous Pearl River Delta. It will take about 40 minutes for the train journey compared with the two hours needed for a car ride on the Guangzhou-Zhuhai Expressway.

Zhuhai, Guangdong Province

Wuxi Village, Jiangsu Province

Suzhou Vies for World Cultural Heritage List

As the next World Heritage Meeting is drawing nearer, international attention is focusing on the host city — Suzhou, a quaint city in east China's Jiangsu Province. Suzhou is hoping to cash in on this golden opportunity to apply for world cultural heritage status.

Suzhou's 2,500-year history has left a wealth of cultural and historical heritages. What merits special attention is that the old city never moved from its original site. The city's complex underwater system and linear layout are well preserved and unchanged, which is very rare for old Chinese cities.

Suzhou's gardens are already listed as a world cultural heritage. And the rest of the ancient town now wants to follow suit. To increase its chances, the city has already started renovating major scenic sites and suburban areas.

FIT Scheme Boosts Macao's Tourism

The FIT policy, which eased travel restrictions on the mainland visitors going to Hong Kong and Macao, was extended to 14 cities in south China's Guangdong Province, Beijing and Shanghai.

The effect of FIT, which became effective on July last year, has become increasingly prominent in boosting Hong Kong and Macao's tourism.

Figures with the Macao Tourist Office showed that over 600,000 visitors from the Chinese mainland came on the FIT measures till Dec. 1 last year, which contributed greatly to a 3% year-on-year increase to Macao's already considerable number of 12 million in visitor arrivals in the year 2002.

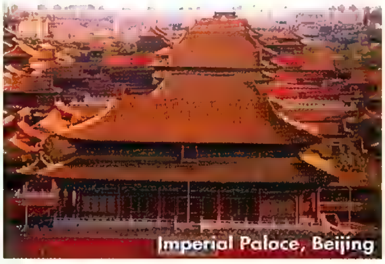
Ruins of St. Paul, Macao

Beijing Airport Get Third Terminal

A third terminal of the Beijing Airport broke ground at the end of March as scheduled.

The projected terminal will be completed and put in operation before 2007. With the completion of the third terminal, the Capital Airport will be capable of handling 60 million journeys, up to 600,000 flights, as well as up to 3 million tn of cargo and mail a year.

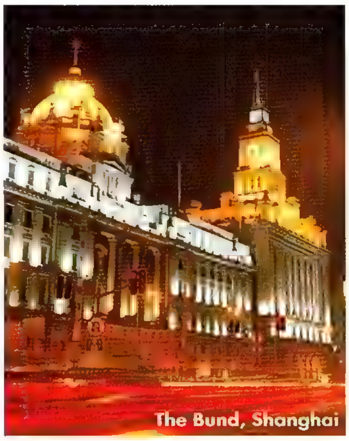
Last year, the Beijing airport handled 25 million journeys, accomplished 2 billion yuan (US $260 million) in operating revenue and made a profit of 380 million yuan.


Imperial Palace, Beijing

New Face for the Old Bund

The Bund area is expected to get a renaissance with new recreation and retail outlets, which would help brightening up the financial centre. The Huangpu District government aims to add shops, restaurants and recreation facilities to the Bund's solemn hub of banks and insurance companies.

The Italian Ermenegildo Zegna Group is likely to become a tenant at the Bund 18, which is under redecoration and is expected to open in September. The neighbouring Bund 3 is scheduled to open next month. The building will host the boutique of Giorgio Armani on the first floor, a gallery and several restaurants serving Chinese, French and Japanese cuisine. With the unique historical location facing the Huangpu River, retail rents in the Bund area are likely to be the highest in the city.


The Bund, Shanghai

Panda Eco-park Scheduled for Completion at Year End

China is expected to have its ecological park for giant pandas at the end of this year, according to researchers at the Chengdu Giant Panda Breeding and Research Base of southwest China's Sichuan Province.

The park is to expand the existing breeding and research base by five times. The 200-ha park will be used to research on the conditions and methods for returning artificially bred giant pandas to the wild.

Artificial breeding of giant pandas aims at eventually expanding their population in the wild; meanwhile, the ecological park will help people to know more about giant pandas and therefore better protect the rare species.

An endangered species, the wild giant pandas' population stands at about 1,000, which are mainly distributed in Sichuan and Shaanxi provinces of China. Currently, about 160 giant pandas are kept in captivity in the world.

China's Fastest Light Rail on Track in Tianjin

A light rail line connecting Pinhai new development area to the downtown core of northeastern China's city of Tianjin began trial operations in March.

The line is the longest and fastest light rail line in China, with 46 km of track and the capability of reaching speeds of up to 100 km/hr.

Trains will depart every 25 minutes during regular hours and every 15 minutes during rush hours. Ticket prices start at 3 yuan for the first 30 km and reach 5 yuan (US $0.60) for any additional distance travelled.

The new line will begin formal operations next year and will offer commuters faster travel time and longer service hours.

Fujian to Present 12 Tourist Routes

[illegible] Fujian bureau of tourism takes advantage of Fujian folk customs and cultures to design different tourist routes for visitors.

The 12 tourist routes are: cultural tour to Fuzhou, leisure tour to Xiamen garden on the sea, trace-seeking tour to Quanzhou marine silk route, sightseeing tour to Wuyi Mountains, vocational tour to Zhangzhou beach, pilgrimage tour to Putian Mazu Temple, fitness tour to Sanming, root-seeking tour for Hakka culture, commemorating tour to the revolutionary bases in western Fujian, sightseeing tour to Ningde, ecological tour to Southeast Fujian coast, and ecological tour to northwest Fujian.

Wuyi Mountains, Fujian Province

Shanghai Prison Opens to Tourists

[illegible] Shanghai Baoshan Prison is opening to local visitors on the last Thursday of every month started in March. This is the first time a local prison has opened up to the public.

Local people will be shown around the prison's office building, meeting room and some of the inmate's cells.

Qinghai-Tibet Railway to Attract Tourists

[illegible] The number of travellers to southwest China's Tibetan Autonomous Region, known as the "roof of the world", is expected to rise up to 20% annually when the Qinghai-Tibet Railway goes into operation in 2007.

The 2,000-km Qinghai-Tibet railway line, which will run from Xining, capital of northwest Qinghai Province, to Lhasa, Tibetan capital, will give a big impetus to the development of tourism in Tibet, which is a key factor for local economic growth.

The section from Xining to Golmud City in Qinghai was completed in 1984. Construction of the 1,000-km section connecting Golmud with Lhasa began in June 2001 and is expected to be completed by 2007.

It is also estimated that 1.8 million people will travel to and out of Tibet in 2010, one-third of which will make the trip by train on the Qinghai-Tibet line — the first railway stretching to Tibet.

Gyantse Ancient Castle, Tibet

Sanya, Hainan Island

35 New Air Routes

[illegible] China will open 35 new air routes during the upcoming summer-autumn season, including 20 domestic and 15 international routes.

From the end of March to the end of October, over 21,400 domestic flights will be offered every week, providing more than 3 million seats, up 12% over the previous year.

Nearly 2,000 international flights will be offered every week to over 70 cities in 31 nations; some 42 mainland cities will have air links to Hong Kong and Macao.

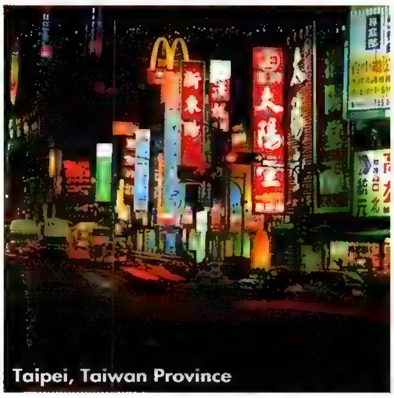
The new domestic routes include Beijing to Jiuzhaigou, Hangzhou to Sanya, Shenzhen to Tongren and Shanghai to Qinhuangdao. The new international routes will include Nanjing to Osaka, Shanghai to Vancouver, Changchun to Sendai, Guangzhou to Saipan and Kunming to Siemreab.

Flight Opened between Shenzhen and Taipei

[illegible] Air Macao opened a new passenger air route linking Shenzhen, south China's Guangdong Province, to Taipei City, on the island province of Taiwan, via Macao in March.

The flights are twice daily for the time being, taking off from Shenzhen at 12:40 p.m. and 8:25 p.m. and leaving Taipei at 8:50 a.m. and 4:35 p.m. The whole trip takes about three hours.

Air Macao has opened flights from eight major cities on the mainland to Taipei via Macao. It has transported some 7 million passengers across the Taiwan Strait since 1995.


Taipei, Taiwan Province

China Airlines Opened Flight to London

[illegible] China Eastern Airlines opened a new air route connecting Shanghai and London in April. The direct service runs three times a week, on Monday, Thursday and Saturday.

Planes leave at 03:30 GMT from Shanghai Pudong International Airport and arrive at London Heathrow Airport at 18:50 GMT. The return flight will take off at 21:20 GMT and arrive in Shanghai at 07:45 GMT.

[illegible]

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Pay Any Price for Suzhou Garden?

Jiangsu Ticket prices that are expected to as much as double at the gardens in Suzhou, East China's Jiangsu Province — a world cultural heritage site, are arousing heated debate.

According to the officials, there is not enough financing from the State to protect the historical sites, and the income from increased ticket prices is an important outlay for maintenance of the gardens. However, many citizens feel upset about the news.

Statistics show that every year there are about 1.5 million visitors coming to the garden, most of whom are old people and travellers from other places in the country.

Compared with other World heritage sites in the country, the ticket prices of Suzhou gardens are on the low side. For example, the ticket of Emei Mountain in Southwest China's Sichuan Province costs 120 yuan (US $15) and that of Lushan Mountain in East China's Jiangxi Province costs 130 yuan (US $16), while the total ticket price of seven Suzhou gardens is only 98 yuan (US $12).

Expats & Foreign Visitors Set for Visa-free Access to Shenzhen

Guangdong Expatriates and foreign visitors in Hong Kong will soon be given visa-free access to Shenzhen as part of new measures under the Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement, or CEPA, between the mainland and HK.

Shenzhen is a border city in south China's Guangdong Province, and became China's first special economic zone in the early 1980s.

Shenzhen tourism authorities say about 800,000 foreigners who visit the special economic zone via Hong Kong would benefit from the new measures. The deal is expected to include visa-free arrangement and measures on transport, immigration checkpoints, and finance and securities services.

BEIJING

By Wang Wenyang

By Cheng Yinian

By Qui Shenwang

By Huang Zimeng

By Hu Wugong

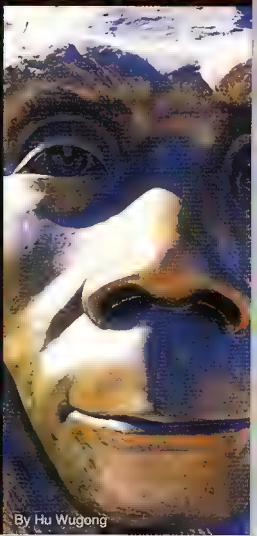
By [illegible] Yunzh

By Xei Sanping

By Wu Weiping

By Lian Huilin

By Ding Wei


By Hu Wugong

Beijing and Taipei, the main administrative cities on both sides of the Taiwan Strait, have strikingly different characters and charms. Beijing is modest, historic and imperial, while Taipei youthful, trendy, yet more superstitious than anywhere else in China.

Moreover, Beijing is so well-known for its influential mandarins that even prominent government officials in Taiwan would humbly admit that they are merely small potatoes in comparison.

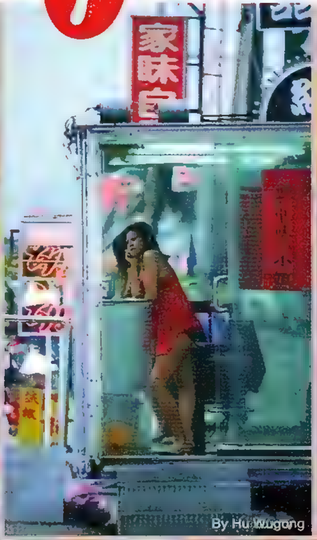
Modern Beijing has been diluting its historic character through urban renewal. The ancient siheyuan (quadrangle courtyard houses) and hutong (alleyway) have given way to wide roads and modern apartment blocks, office buildings and shopping malls. Old Beijingers lament the loss of the city's heritage. Their Taipei counterparts, however, have no such feelings. The oldest buildings in Taipei date back barely half a century. If they have to be demolished, go ahead, people would say. This mentality has inspired such modern constructions as the Taipei 101 building. It's indeed a blessing to be young.

Photos are selected from the works of over a hundred photographers

A Tale of Two Cities: BEIJING & TAIPEI

TAIPEI

By Hu Wugong


By Hu Wugong

By Wei Zhide

By Cheng Haiwen

By Huang Yanhong

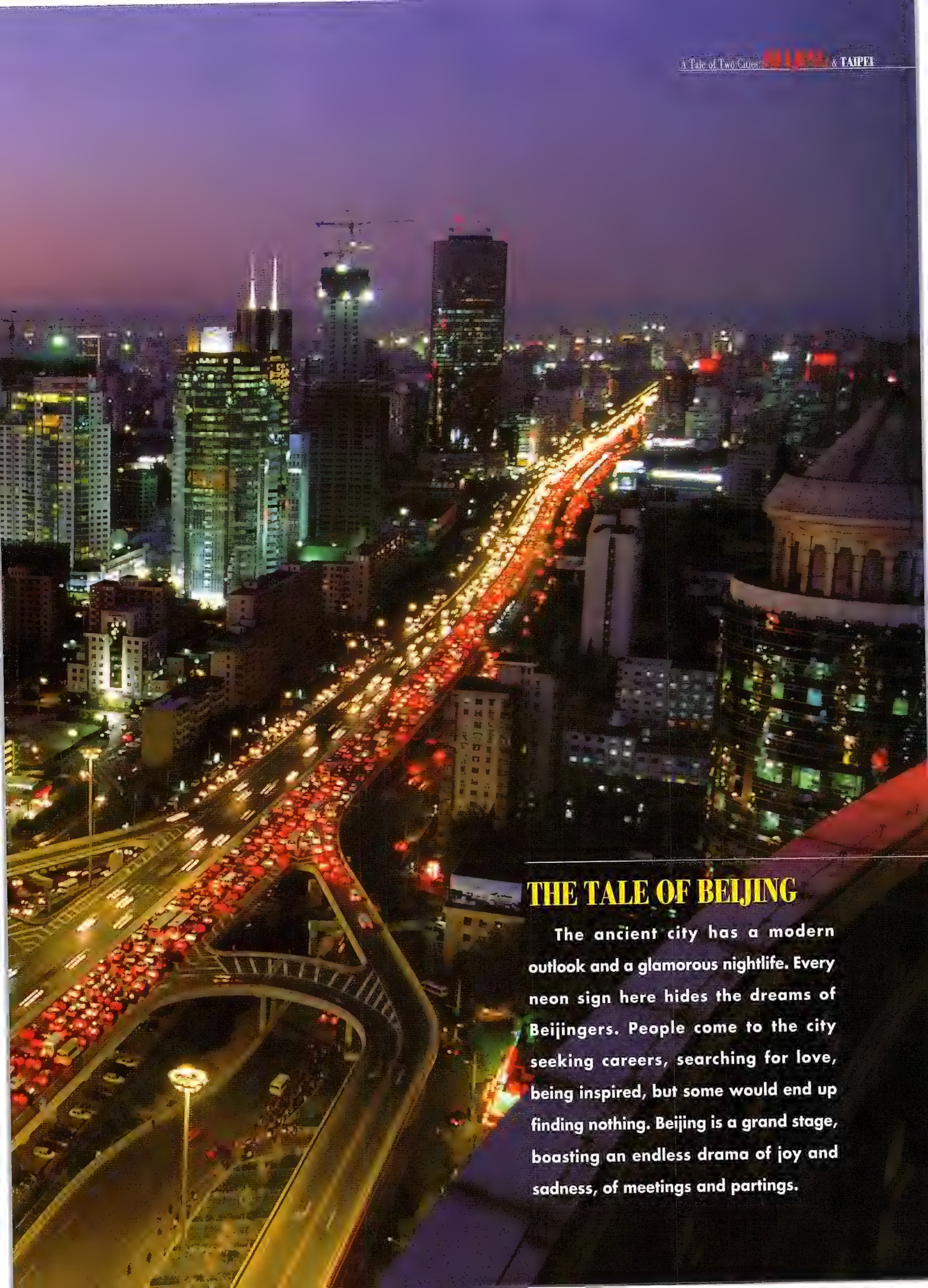
By Huang Yanhong

By Lui Yang

y Huang Yanhong

By Ye Taoyuan

The business district along Dongsanhuan (The east third ring road). Beijing has more than two million vehicles, which has led to frequent traffic congestion. (By Li Qianguang)



THE TALE OF BEIJING

The ancient city has a modern outlook and a glamorous nightlife. Every neon sign here hides the dreams of Beijingers. People come to the city seeking careers, searching for love, being inspired, but some would end up finding nothing. Beijing is a grand stage, boasting an endless drama of joy and sadness, of meetings and partings.

▲**Fendoubei,** who is from Hong Kong , found her partner in Beijing.

🔴 I met a good friend from Beijing when I was in college so I often came here.

🟢 Beijing has a rich culture and a lot of knowledgeable and fascinating people. The good friend has become my husband so I cherish a deeper affection for Beijing.

▲**Sun Xiaoru,** who is from Nanchong, Sichuan Province, is a film director.

🔴 Beijing offers the opportunities and atmosphere for people to make good films

🟢 I know a group of young people devoted to making films in Beijing Film Academ
because they know that film-making is not a distant dream.

Photos & Articles by the Editorial Department

BEIJING AS SEEN BY OUTSIDERS....

🔴 Why did you come to Beijing? 🟢 What's your impression of Beijing?

▲**Mr. Wen,** a freelance writer from Shenyang, Liaoning Province, now living in Beijing.

🔴 I came to Beijing to take an exam.

🟢 Beijing is large and imposing, and people here are more lively.

◀**Lin Chong,** wh
is from Xining
Qinghai Province, is
freelance photograph
in Beijing.

🔴 I came here becaus
Tiananmen is i
Beijing.

🟢 Beijing is wonderful
enjoy the candie
haws and hot pot.

▶**Cecilia,** who is from Hong Kong, has been the chief public relations officer for a restaurant in Beijing for more than four years.

🔴 I had wanted to come to Beijing since I was a child.

🟢 Daily life in Beijing is not as easy as Hong Kong, but the city has four distinctive seasons. The beautiful autumn mornings and wonderful snowy winter evenings are especially memorable. The people in Beijing are honest, friendly and eager to better themselves.

▲**Amu,** a Tibetan singer from Danba, Sichuan Province, pursues a career in Beijin

🔴 I came to Beijing to take part in the Competition of Singers from Western Chir
organised by CCTV.

🟢 Beijing gives me pressure because I realise there is so much to learn.

▼ **Guo Wen,** who is from Weifang, Shandong Province, works in a company in Beijing.

🔴 I just wanted to change my carefree but dreary life.

🟢 The taxis are a window on the city, but driving standards need to be improved.

▼ **Pu Qiong,** who is from Ganzhi, Sichuan Province.

🔴 I am studying at university.

🟢 Beijing is full of huge buildings and heavy traffic.

▼ **Chen Nong,** who is from Fujian, runs a bar in Beijing.

🔴 I don't really know why.

🟢 The bar is located in a hutong because it is the distinctive feature of Beijing.

▼ **Lu Hongyu,** an advertising director, is a native of Xuzhou, Jiangsu Province.

🔴 I studied in Beijing and found a job here after graduation.

🟢 Beijing is the right place to realise my aspirations.

▲ **Lu Yuemei,** who is from Shanghai, is a housewife.

🔴 I came to Beijing to visit my daughter.

🟢 I had seen Beijing on TV, but now I have seen them with my own eyes.

▲ **Dong Yongjie,** a photography technician, comes from Hohhot, Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region.

🔴 I came to Beijing for the art of photography.

🟢 I am often invited into Beijingers' home while asking directions.

▲ **Shao Jie,** a freelance writer, comes from Qingzhou, Shandong Province.

🔴 I studied in Beijing and then stayed because I like Beijing very much.

🟢 Beijing makes me feel free and the people are tolerant.

▲ **Dong Xingliang,** a security guard, comes from Qixian County, Shanxi Province.

🔴 My uncle works in Beijing and I came to visit him and then stayed to work.

🟢 I like to go to Tiananmen Square and the Palace Museum.

▼ **Po Zhengshu,** who is from North Korea, came to start his business.

🔴 I came to Beijing to develop the Chinese market.

🟢 Beijing is really beautiful, but it means a lot of pressure for me.

▼ **Xiao Xin,** a bartender, comes from Shanxi.

🔴 I came to Beijing as a tourist and stayed to work.

🟢 I like Wangfujing Street very much and want to have my black and white wedding pictures taken there.

▼ **Bo Bo** is a student from Beidaihe, Hebei Province.

🔴 I am studying at Beijing Broadcasting Institute.

🟢 People can learn more in Beijing than in any other places.

▼ **Zhong Xudong,** who is from Hong Kong, has a camera and video appliance shop.

🔴 I was returning to my hometown.

🟢 My friends in Beijing often get together to discuss photography.

Fading Memories of
OLD BEIJING

Article by Li Jiangshu

Since its establishment as the Capital of the Jin Dynasty in 1153, Beijing has been China's capital for 850 years*. Built on the alluvial plain of the Yongding River, Beijing is the ultimate achievement of China's ancient capital development in terms of layout, scale and duration. It also represents the world's highest attainment in city construction over the same period.

Today as I wander along the city moat below the trapezoid-shaped city wall built over 700 years ago, and climb the sky-scraping CCTV Tower looking east, I cannot find the broken yet magnificent high walls and grey bricks any more. The nine inner city gates and seven outer city gates are gone forever, so is the network of hutong (alleyway) laid out seven centuries ago.

Since 1952, Beijing's outer city wall has been torn down section by section for the sake of modern construction. All that remain are the three gate towers, Zhengyangmen — the most important of the nine city gates — Deshengmen and Dongbianmen, as well as two shorter sections of the city wall.

After the city gates were demolished, the hutongs became endangered. More than 600 years ago, it was the network of hutongs that connected the nine inner city gates and seven outer city gates. Now, under the city planners' principle of "extending in all directions", more than 2,000 hutongs in Beijing's inner city and over 1,000 in the outer city are being bulldozed at a rate of 60 per year. The names that used to be so familiar to old Beijing residents, such as the Biandan (Shoulder Pole) Hutong, Shaojiu (Liqour) Hutong, Kusi (Storehouse) Hutong, Hongluo (Red Gauze) Hutong and Beizhugan (North Bamboo Pole) Hutong, are now only memories.

The breakdown of hutongs has led to an interesting phenomenon though. Farmers from the city's outskirts can be

1

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*Jin (1115-1234), Yuan (1271-1368), Ming (1368-1644) and Qing (1644-1911) Dynasties

1. Demolition of hutong buildings (by Cai Rongfeng)
2. Balancing the development of a modern city with preservation of the architectural heritage has become a contentious issue in Beijing. (by Hu Jinxi)

1.

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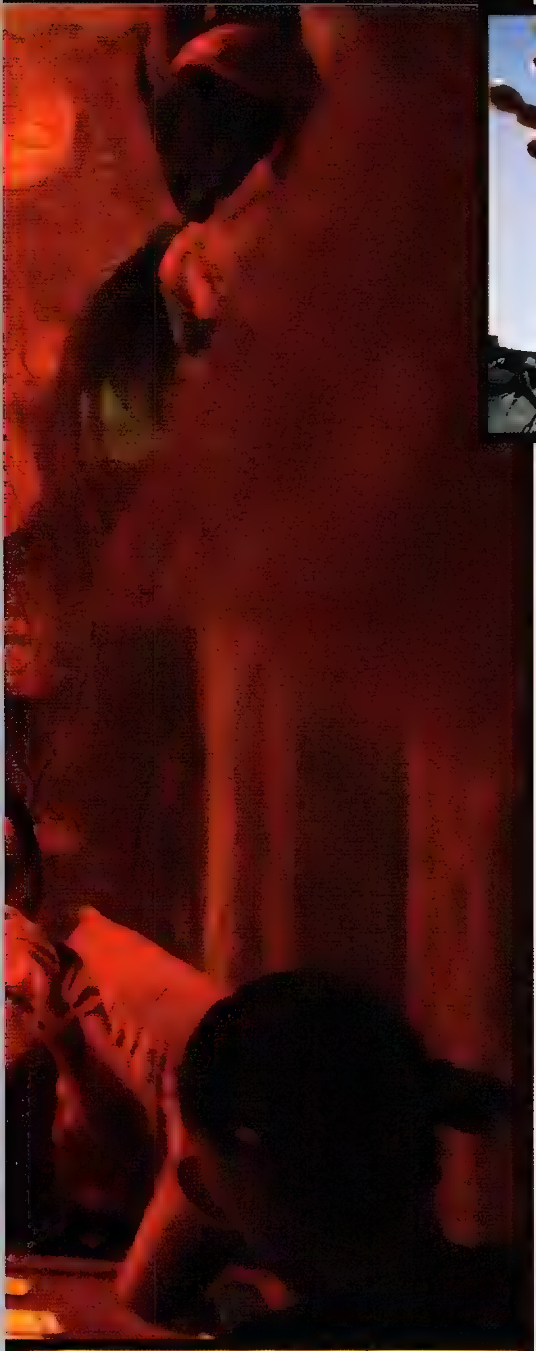


found in piles of hutong debris searching for old bricks after midnight. They know very well that the quality of the age-old bricks is beyond compare and they will use them to make their own homes.

The hutongs are disappearing, together with the itinerant repairers of umbrellas and kitchen wares, pedlars of sugar-coated haws and deep-fried dough twists....

In the 1950s, Beijing was much colder than today. From dusk till late into the evening, vendors of cow livers, donkey meat, boiled sheep heads, soya-bean milk, hardened bean curd and boiling wontons pushed their two-wheeled barrows through hutongs, as the acetylene lamps on their barrows flickered the greenish blue light. Early in the morning many peddlers in their cotton-padded dark robes and dogskin hats would appear outside the Hepingmen Gate, pulling their camels and herding their sheep.

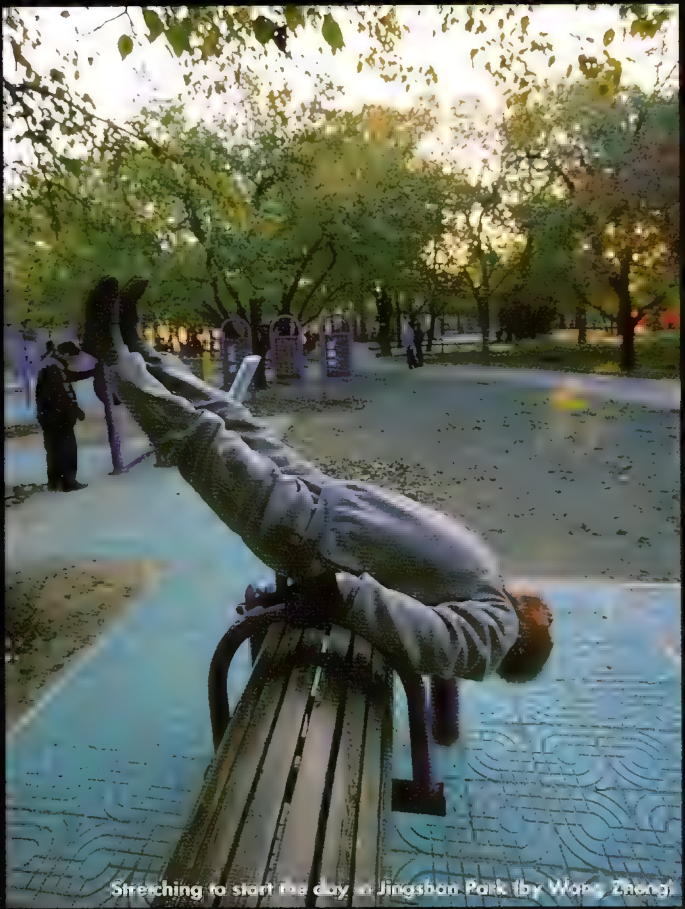
When the scheme of "keeping the old city while building a new one" was negated, construction in Beijing has always seemed uncoordinated, as if city planners were trying to cram square pegs into round holes. The hutongs and city walls were obstacles to transportation, they claimed. It was impossible to keep the old town while developing a new one. In order to build the Xizhimen flyover, a Yuan Dynasty (1271-1368) city gate was demolished; yet even after the flyover was completed, traffic remained bad.

Hence, bizarre contradictions are seen everywhere: the 180-m-high chimney of a thermo-electric plant standing next to the pristine and spectacular Tianning Temple, which was built during the Northern Wei Dynasty over 1,000 years ago; the Di'anmen Shopping Mall and the Experimental Theatre breaking the connection between the Drum Tower and the central axial line; tower buildings overlooking the grey cylindrical tiles, the dry cinder tiles, the bluestone tiles, the tiles in intaglio and the round-ridge roofs of the old quadrangle compound houses.

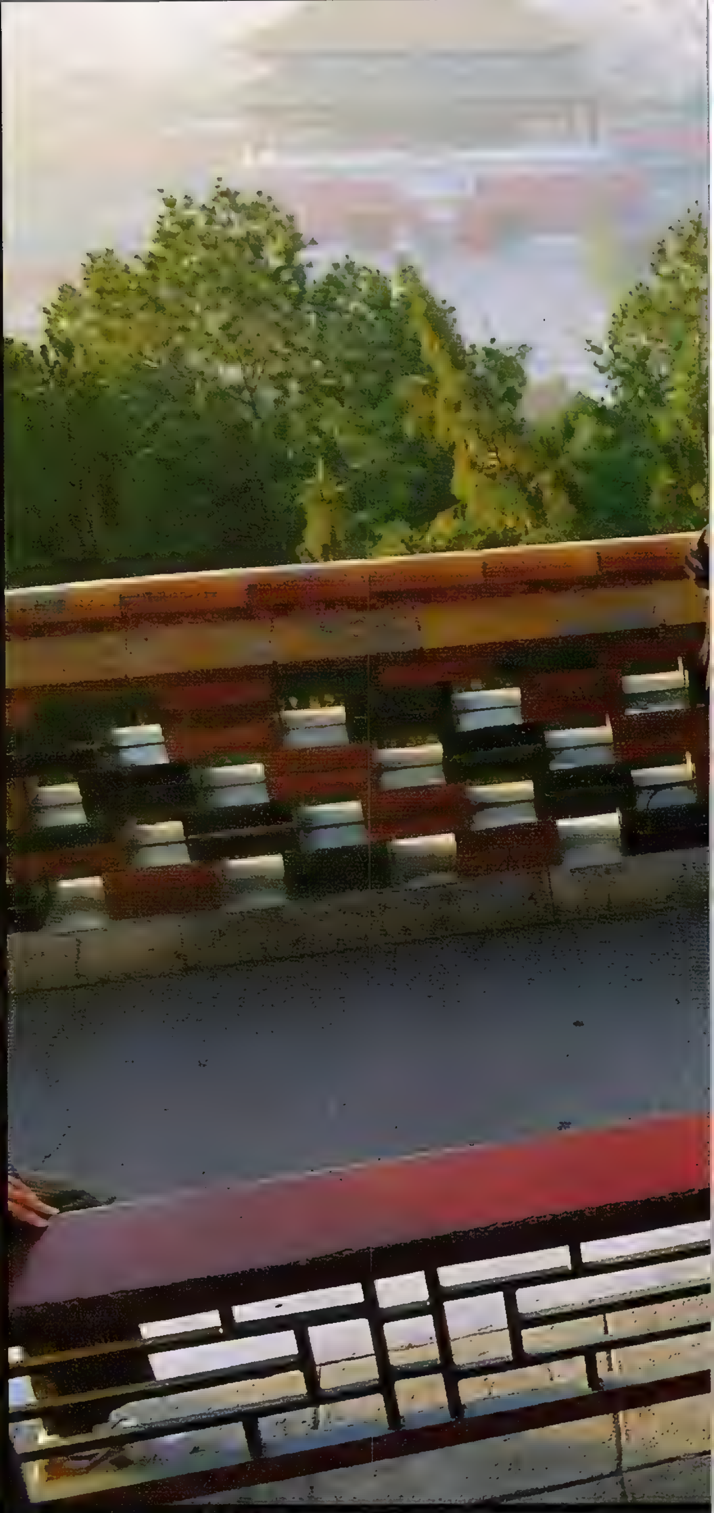
These high buildings have also changed the air currents and blocked the passage of sound. When you stand in the Wanchun Pavilion on top of the city's highest hill, Jingshan, and look northward, the most striking buildings should be the Drum Tower and the Bell Tower. An old ballad cited "Dongsi, Xidan and the Drum Tower" as Beijing's most notable landmarks. The strike of the bell at dawn and the beat of the drum at dusk were heard for 800 years in the city. The Drum Tower was not only the centre for reporting the time in the capital, but was surrounded by throngs of teahouses, pawnshops, bathhouses, tobacconists, fabric stores, grain shops and restaurants. During the Ming Dynasty over 500 years ago, records show that "the Drum Tower gave 108 drum beats to mark midnight every day" and the "clear solemn sounds of the bell break the quietness at dawn and can reach as far as six kilometres around the city".

1. **Ancient murals on the wall of a bar in the Shichahai area (by Chan Yat Nin)**
2. **Tea served in big bowls is a challenge to pour. (by Zhang Tongsheng)**
3. **People living in the hutong enjoy pancakes for breakfast on their way to work (by Chan Yat Nin)**
4. **Roasting chestnuts on Ping'an Street (by Chan Yat Nin)**
5. **Candied haws are a specialty of Beijing (by Hu Jinxi)**

An elderly man exercising beside the Heilongtan park (by Yuan Xuejun)



Stretching to start the day in Jingshan Park (by Wang Zhong)



[illegible] while working out (by Chan Yat Nin)

Limbering up on the top of the hill of Jingshan Park in the early morning (by Zhou Guoqiang)

Dancing at a corner of the Zihuyuan Park (by Song [illegible]ujun)

An elderly man keeps in shape on the top of the hill in Jingshan Park. (by Zhou Guoqiang)

According to the description, the sounds from the Drum and Bell Towers could be heard at Dongzhimen gate. This Ming Dynasty practice of tolling the time in the Drum and Bell Towers from 11 pm to 1 am was restored in 2002. At that appointed time, I held my breath and waited calmly at Andingmen, only two kilometres from the towers, but I failed to hear the striking of drum and bell.

Shichahai (Ten-Temple Lake) used to be a large body of water at the end of the south-north Grand Canal in the Yuan Dynasty and a dock in Beijing. During the Ming and Qing Dynasties, princes' residences and private gardens surrounded the lake, which was embraced by drooping willows against a distant background of half hidden green hills. There are plenty of hutongs and streets connecting with each other and leading to the lake. Now the tranquil water has been disturbed by music, singing, and merry-making through the night.

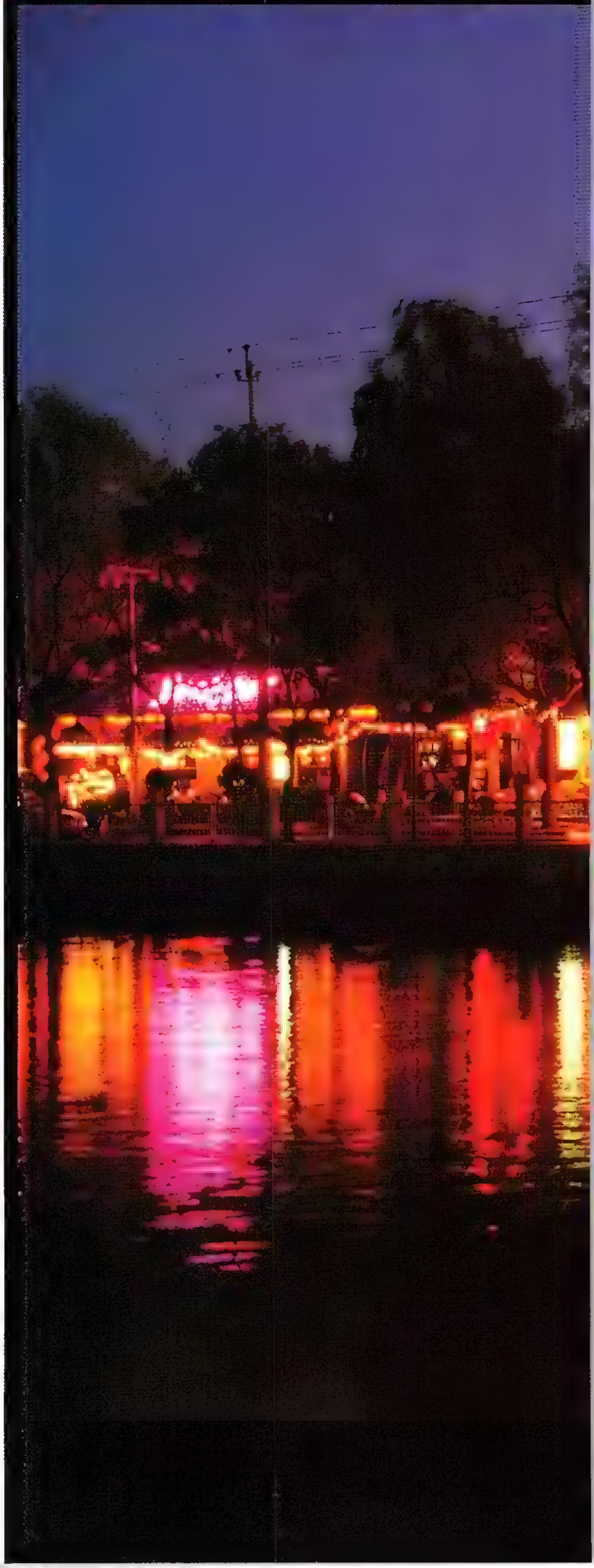
As the gold-plated patterns on the roof sheathing of the Drum Tower reflects the dim red light, a Ming Dynasty-style boat floats on the river. From the mat of the boat first came the music of saxophone, then the minuet. Suddenly the minuet stopped, followed by a woman's affectedly sweet singing, "I really miss you so much...."

When most of the visitors stand on the Yinding Bridge, they cannot verify and appreciate the description of the place as one of the "Eight Small Wonders of Yanjing" — "Viewing the hills late at dusk by the Yinding Bridge" from where "the distant hills remain green just as before" — because the view of the distant hills are blocked by a 12-storey modern building west of the bridge.

The next day visitors might go to Panjiayuan to buy antiques, to Baoguo Temple for ancient coins, to Xiushui Street for brand-name clothes, and to Maliandao for tea. Before 1996, Maliandao was a desolate place unknown to most Beijingers. Now some 4,000 teashops flank the street where one sixth of China's tea is collected and sold. Usually, the most pressing want of the visitors to the Yinding Bridge is to have a nice dinner. Guijie Street is not a bad choice. From early evening to dawn, the red lanterns along the street remain lit, and they are contrasted with top-of-the-range cars parked on the street beside rusting jalopies.

The delicacies available in Guijie Street include sheep bones, stewed mutton, hot spicy small lobsters, boiled shrimp, fish with red hot chili, boiled fish with sour pickled cabbage, hot pot with pig brains and ox tripe. Usually when the diners come out from restaurants still savouring these spicy delicacies, their faces are as red as the lanterns hanging on trees.

People in Beijing have always devoted much time and effort to food. When Westerners were using steam engines, the Chinese invented the roast duck. Roast duck cooked with "hidden" fire that is done by burning soft fuels such as straw and twigs — the same way the Europeans baked goose. Of course, another popular way to roast ducks is to cook with direct fire. The fuel used in



1. **In the square between the Bell Tower and Drum Tower, dozens of pedicabs are prepared to give a tour to the hutong. (by Su Ke)**
2. **The Yingding Bridge in the golden autumn dusk (by Zhu Tianhua)**
3. **People enjoying the specialty snacks of Beijing in a traditional setting (by Qiu Shengwang)**
4. **Many bars have opened along the lakesides in the Shichahai area, providing a pleasant alternative to the famous Sanlitun district. (by Zhu Jianhui)**

3

4

Fading Memories of OLD BEIJING

1. Dressing up as an empress in front of the Palace Museum, Beijing (by Zhou Guoqiang)
2. Old attractions and modern spectacles in the ancient city (by Yang Bingzheng)
3. A century-old roast duck restaurant boasts of serving a hundred million roast ducks (by Hu Jinxi)
4. A pedicab driver puts his feet up. (by Xie Guanghui)

第100000000
烤鸭出炉
1999年

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4

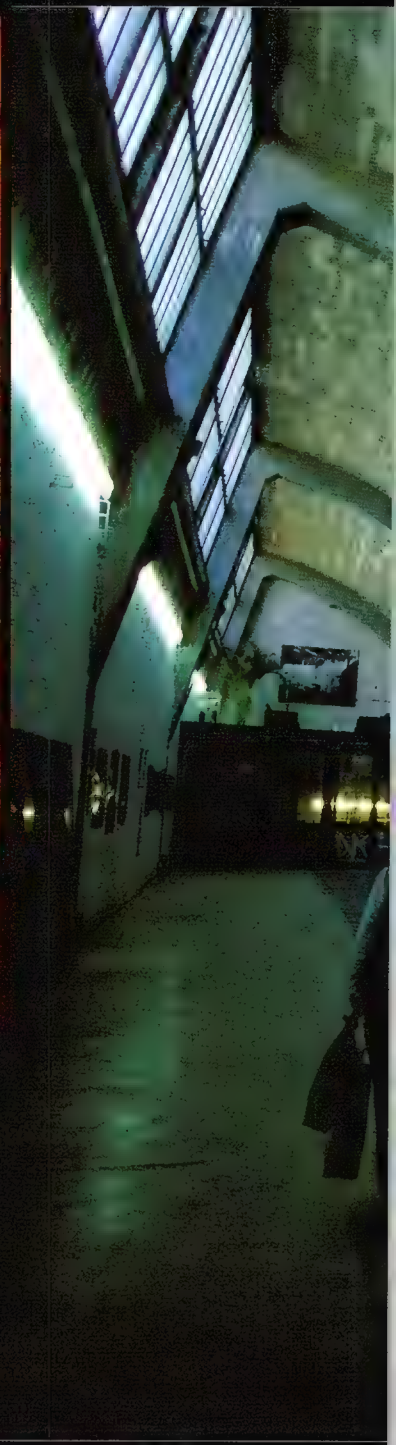
this method must be fruit tree wood, with date as the best. You can never cheat an old customer, because from one bite he can tell if the duck was baked with pear tree wood or apple tree wood.

Beijing is full of urban legend when it comes to food. On New Year's Eve of 1752, two servants carried gauze lamps, one walking before and the other behind the master — Emperor Qianlong dressed in plain clothes as a literary man. The three entered a small Liji Restaurant that had only five tables at the Xianyukou Hutong for refreshments. The food was very tasty and the wine mellow. After midnight when the sound of firecrackers and the night watchmen came, the emperor sighed deeply, "You're probably the only restaurant open at this time of the year in Beijing. You should be named Duyichu (the One and Only Place)." After he returned to the palace, he bestowed the inscription in his own calligraphy on the restaurant. Ever since then, the delicacies of Malian boiled pork, steamed dumplings with the dough gathered in 18 pleats at the top, and pork with chopped scallions have been extremely popular.

Young people born in the 1970s and 1980s have no interest in the old Beijing snacks sold at Donghuamen, such as Li's sweetened fried flour gruel, Feng's quick boiled tripe, Ma's sheep head, and the new year cakes. Instead, they are fonder of Yoshinoya, club steak, goose liver pate, and prefer an elegant and quiet dining environment. In their white porcelain cups are the aromatic Blue Mountain, Starbucks, or the latest generation of Tim Hortons coffees. They might sit idly, just reclining in a leather sofa for two hours, or thumb through a novel written by Kurakami Haruki. Even though young people may like shirts printed with the image of Che Guevara, the image may merely serve as a modern symbol, as they may have no idea who Che is. To them, equality, justice, idealism and the care for people at the bottom of society are myths.

Beijing is expanding at a phenomenal rate nowadays. The 200-km Sixth Ring Road connects Beijing's suburbs with the old city proper encircled within the Second Ring Road. Cars frequently jam the 33-km Second Ring

购物天堂
SPA
满200
返100
信贷消费排行
泰国畅享
阳光温泉
满即送
疯狂超低折扣
总动员
SOGO



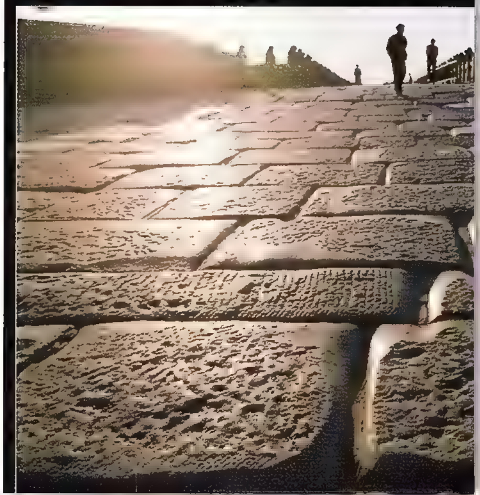
Road, which used to be the course of the old city wall. Among its three million floating population are some 800,000 business people, and migrant workers hunting for jobs in the dynamic economic circle between the Third and Fourth Ring Roads.

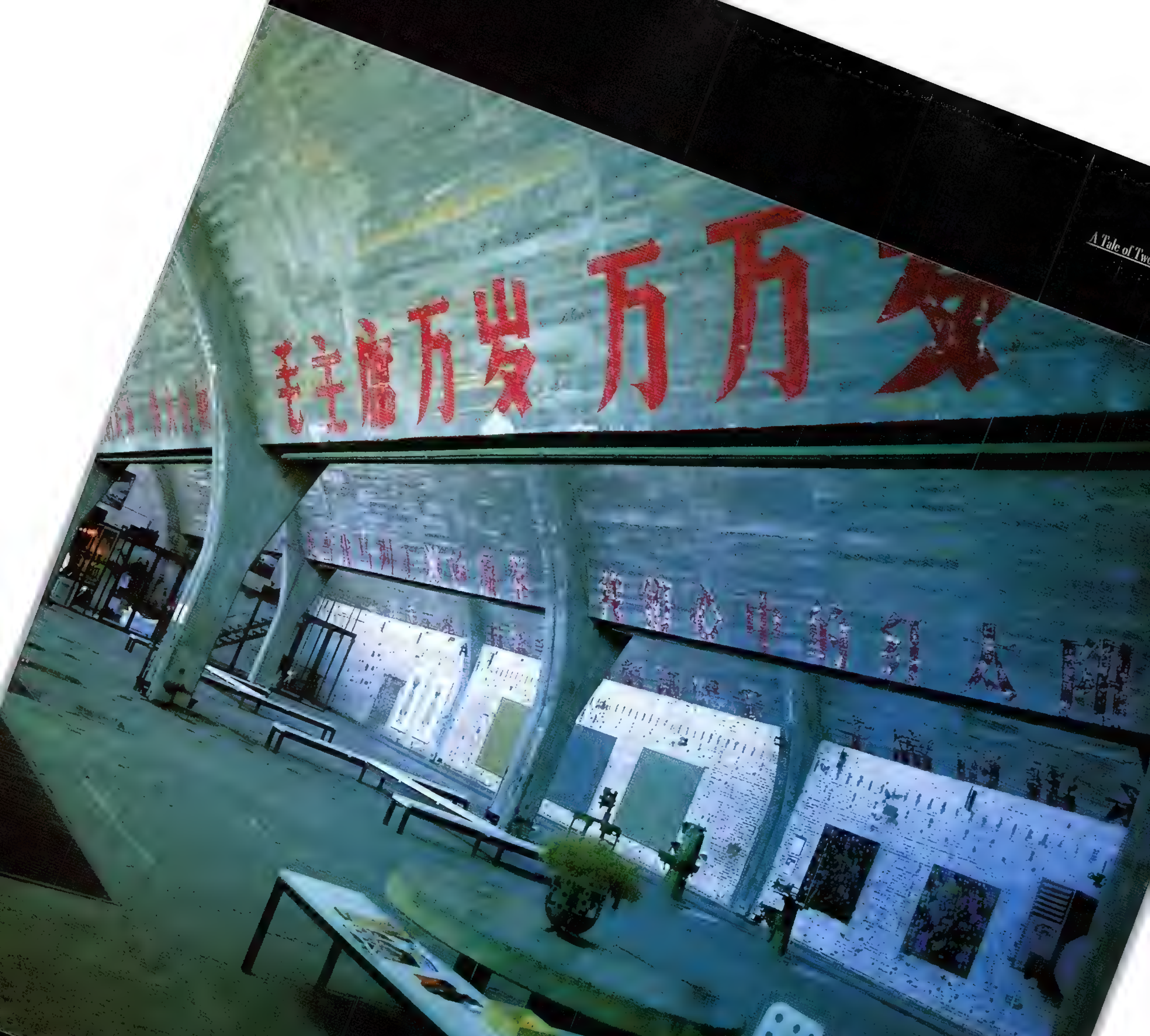
Several hundred painters moved from the Fuyuanmen at the Old Summer Palace, to Xindian, Songzhuang, Lamazhuang and Xiaobaocun Villages in Beijing's Tongzhou District in 1995 and joined writers, composers, photographers and graphic artists in the abandoned workshop of the "798" Factory at Dashanzi in 2001. In the southeastern and northeastern corners of the capital, they have sent their freethinkers' balloons up to the sky that has polluted by the exhaust fumes.

Walking on the pavement, you can spot young girls employed by Thunderbird or the Little Red Horse Express Company hastily passing by on bicycles; or women carrying leather handbags and wearing heavy smoky eye shadow stroll leisurely along Xidan Street.

The clothes which the women seem to spend so much on are European and Korean brands, and they are usually made of leather, ostrich feathers, bright prints, and almost vulgar boa skins. In the international furniture stores, like Ikea, Illinois and COFCO Plaza, you can find small birthday candles, Italian Russeni cabinets made of pear tree wood, Danish maple bookcases, and Chinese rosewood chairs in Ming and Qing Dynasty styles.

The impetuous temperament of the big metropolis and the fast changing kaleidoscope of life have made more people depressed, stressed, strung out and full of trepidation. They long for green lawns and clear lakes, something to relieve them of their worries and blues. Therefore, when they need more space where they can frolic and express themselves, they set out to climb the Western Hills in the weekends. Standing by the stele with Emperor Qianlong's inscription "Western Hills Shimmering in Snow" and looking east, people can have a good view of coloured autumn maple leaves . People also like to go to the Biyun (Azure Clouds) Temple where there are 500 arhats, each with a different expression. Or they may go to the Lugou Bridge to count from end to end the 485 small lions carved on the stone rails and posts. They also like to go into the huge cave naturally formed in the Longgu (Dragon Bone) Mountain to get see how their ancestors' lived more than 500,000 years ago. Personally I like to go to the Yuquan (Jade Spring) Mountain with six peaks in the Western Hills, with the charms of both mountain and water.





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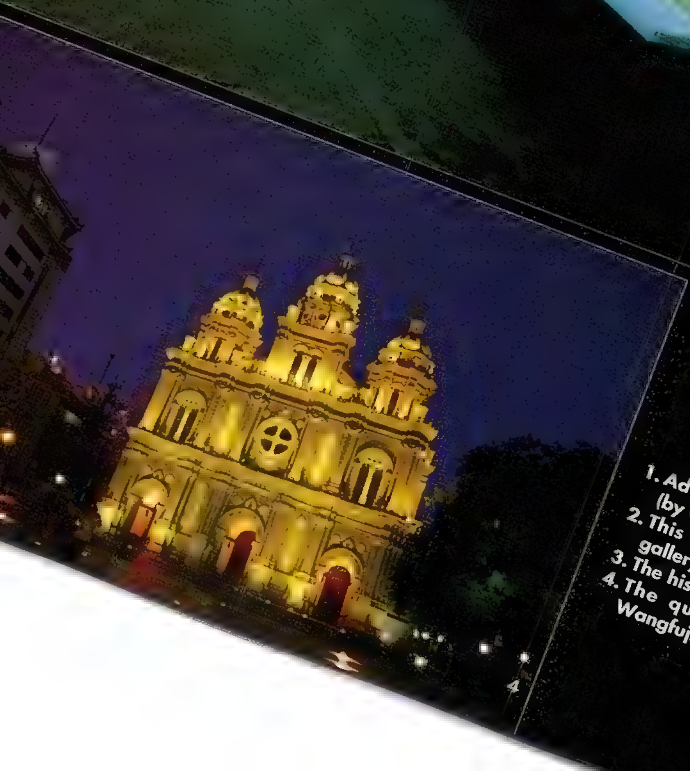

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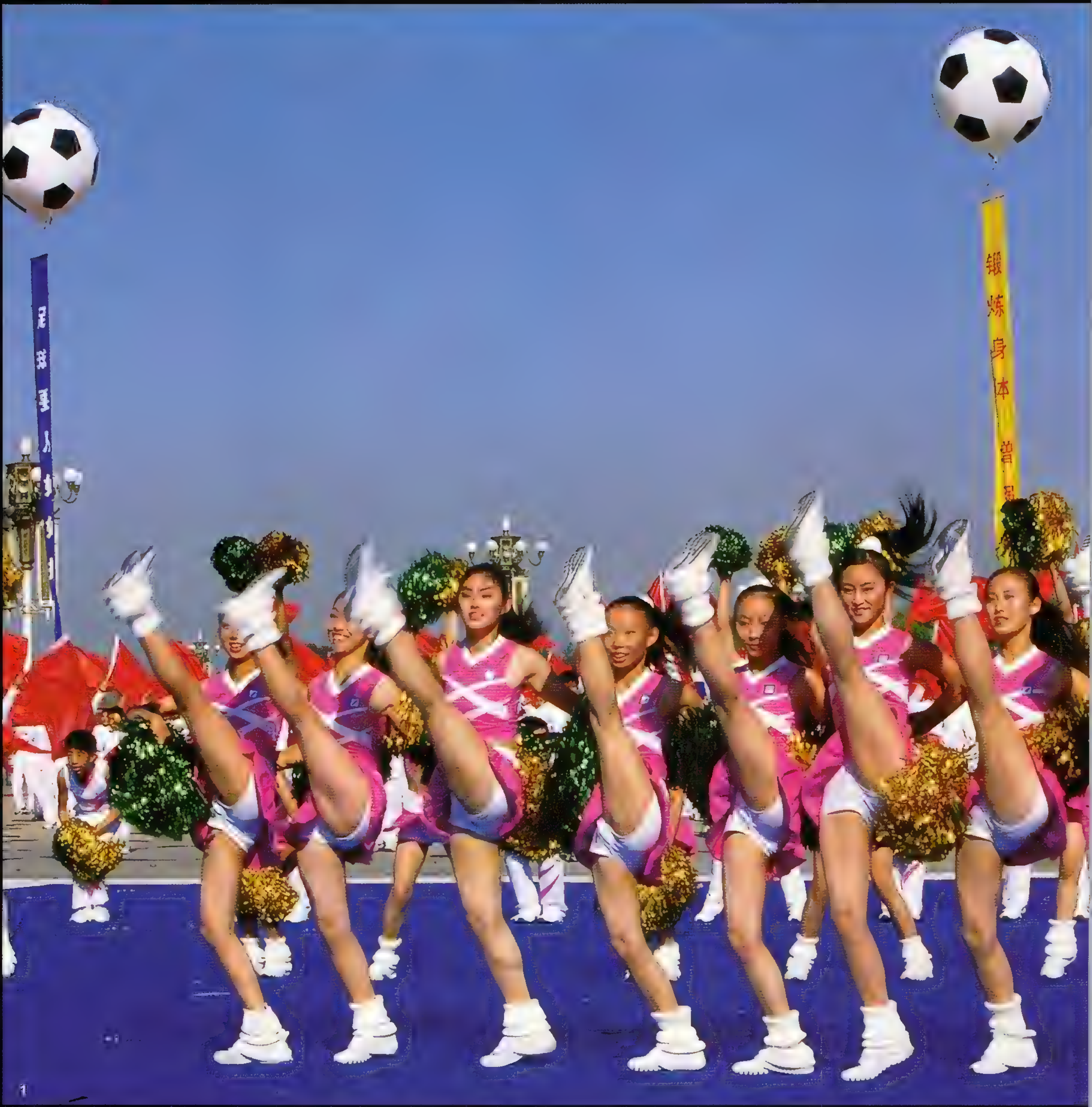
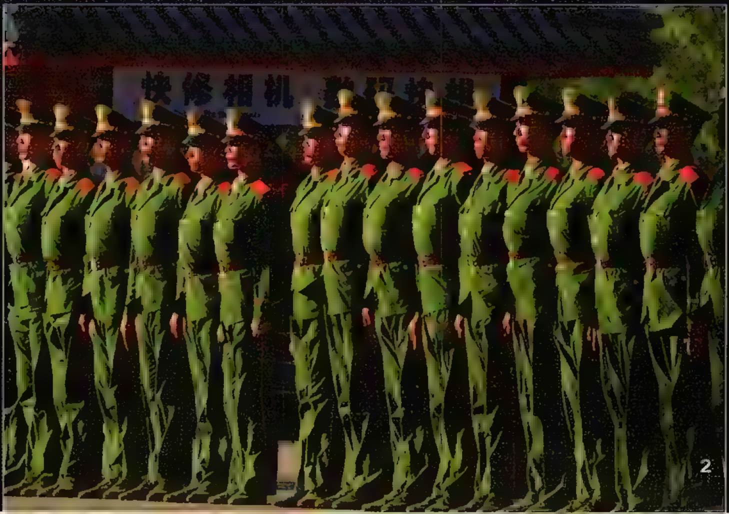
1. Advertising posters can been see everywhere. (by Qiu Shengwang)
2. This old factory workshop has become an art gallery. (by Zhang Zuo)
3. The historic Marco Polo Bridge (by Li Ge)
4. The quiet Dongtang Church on the busy Wangfujing Street (by Yu Yuntian)



1. Some of the 10,000 children who performed at the launch ceremony of the 15-year plan for the development of teenage football (by Ding Wei)
2. Soldiers parade in the early morning at the Palace Museum. (by Zhu Tianhua)
3. Guards in Wangfujing Street doing morning training (by Wang Jianjun)



The pigeons fluttering about in front of the Eastern Church — one of the four major Catholic churches in Beijing — have long been used to the hubbub at Wangfujing. In the Gothic-style Northern Church at Xishiku, the Jesuits nuns in long dark habits are praying, "You should love each other. Just as the way I love you, you should love each other."

In the Guangji Temple on Fuchengmen Street, there preserved 100,000 of Buddhist scriptures. When entering the temple, you may feel loftiness, peaceful and piousness. One kilometre west of the Guangji Temple is the Miaoying Temple. The earliest and the biggest Tibetan Buddhist Dagoba is preserved there, where Beijing people can see a Dagoba bigger and taller than the White Dagoba in Beihai Park even without leaving the city. Whenever you are depressed or overjoyed, you should go to visit the Dagoba where 20 pieces of Sarira of Sakyamuni are buried. After walking around the Dagoba for 36, 72 or 108 times, you may even hit by an inspiration.

The growth of the city has eradicated differences and encouraged uniformity. The old city of Beijing is gone — a page turned over forever. I can only hold the lost ground in my heart. Whenever I have the time, I walk through a 100 or 200-year-old hutong that might be gone next month, or stop before an elaborately carved gate tower, or linger before the residences of the outstanding figures who used to awaken the world with their writings or influence the world with their actions. Evening clouds and spring trees — all make me nostalgic and miss the age-old grey bricks and scarlet red gates of a lost old Beijing. When I have a little time on a summer's day, I make myself a pot of good scented tea. The reed matting sunshade helps to cool me down. In the sequestered hutong, an old quadrangle compound house has clove trees in the front yard and Chinese flowering crabapples at the back, and a Chinese jujube tree stretches out into the lane. I enjoyed the cooing of pigeons in the blue autumn sky, the shoulder-high dried yellow grass at Yuanmingyuan in the sunset, and even the cries of the crows.

A Qing Dynasty poet once described "crowds of crows perch on the Drum Tower at sunset". In the misty morning, crows fly from the old cypress trees at the Temple of Heaven, the Temple of Earth, the Bell and Drum Towers, the Forbidden City, the Zhongshan Park to the fields of Taiyanggong People's Commune to look for food. At dusk, they come back to the city. The saying "the cry of the crow is the laughter of the ghost" is not true. Their cries are apparently disordered, but properly proportioned at different pitches, just like their flights. They dive into and out of the low and dim red clouds, calling and answering each other. The cawing of the crows makes people feel safe and content, symbolising a good ending of another day.

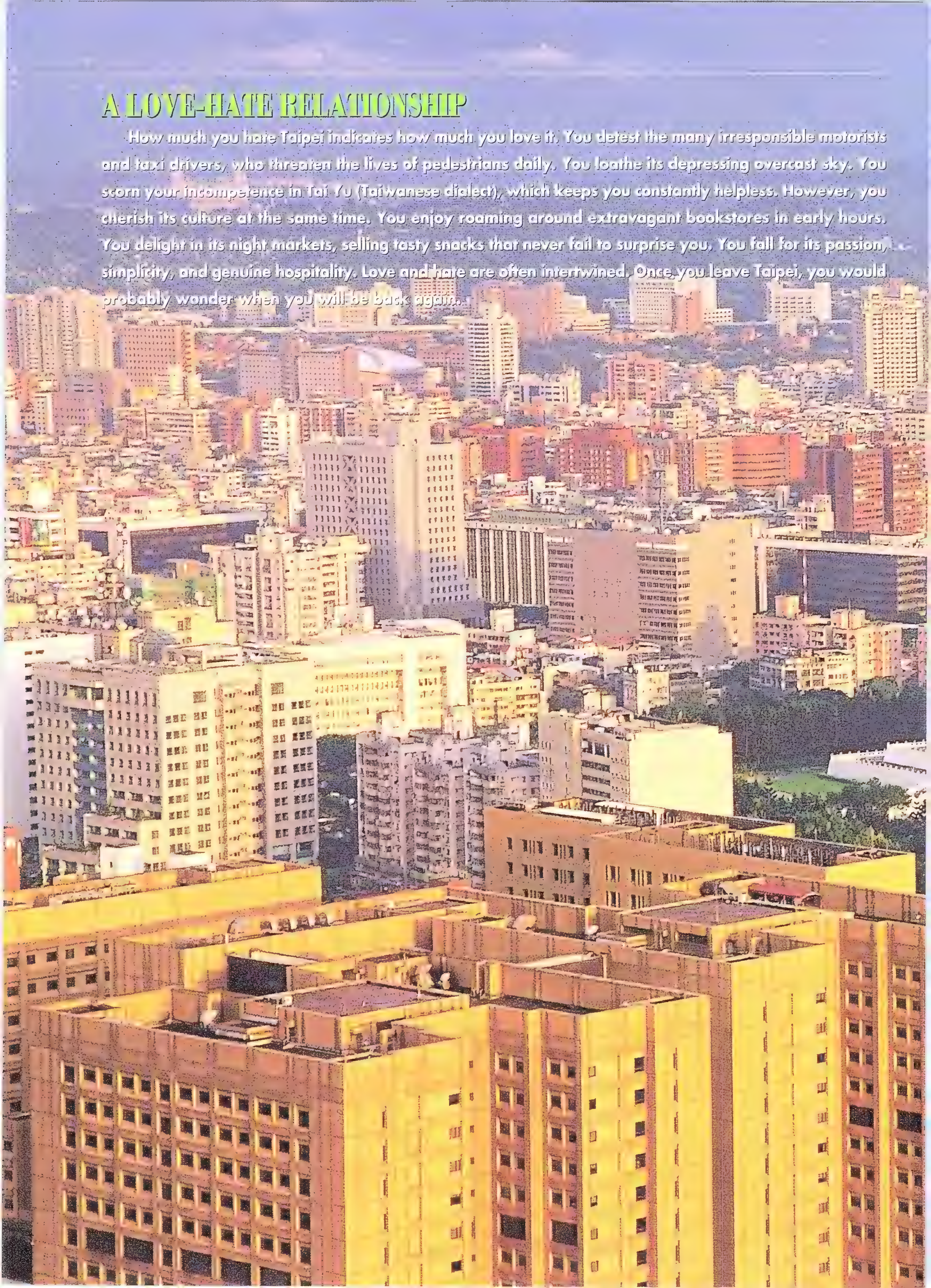
One morning in 2003, I took a full soda bottle of tea, put on my straw hat, stripped to my vest and rode along the Fifth Ring Road toward Yuquan Mountain.

In the sweltering days of July, the asphalt road was almost melted by the scorching sun. As I rode along, I was greeted by a flow of hot wind with a burning smell. I held tightly the handlebars, aware clearly of a stream of strong nostalgia carried in the wind.

About the author: Li Jiangshu,a senior reporter and photographer of twenty years, writes literary articles, commentaries and reviews on photography.

A LOVE-HATE RELATIONSHIP

How much you hate Taipei indicates how much you love it. You detest the many irresponsible motorists and taxi drivers, who threaten the lives of pedestrians daily. You loathe its depressing overcast sky. You scorn your incompetence in Tai Yu (Taiwanese dialect), which keeps you constantly helpless. However, you cherish its culture at the same time. You enjoy roaming around extravagant bookstores in early hours. You delight in its night markets, selling tasty snacks that never fail to surprise you. You fall for its passion, simplicity, and genuine hospitality. Love and hate are often intertwined. Once you leave Taipei, you would probably wonder when you will be back again.



Taipei is full of life and has its own distinctive feature. (by Huang Yanhong)

TAIPEI IN THE EYES OF PEOPLE FROM HK...

● Why do you go to Taipei? ● What's your impression of Taipei?

▲**Mr. Cai** is celebrating his wedding.

- ● Things are cheap in Taipei and it has delicious food, tea and shells which I like very much. Hong Kong is close and there is no language problem.
- ● Taipei life is leisurely and unhurried. It is more spacious than Hong Kong, and it It has a more rich and elegant tea culture than the mainland and more delicious food.

▲**Linus** is a primary school teacher.

- ● I wanted to go to a place which was close and easy to communicate as far as language went.
- ● Taipei gives people a comfortable and unrestrained feeling. You can read books in a bookstore the whole day and no one will interrupt you. The local snacks are really appetizing, such as the freshwater fish snacks, which I have never had in Hong Kong.

◀**Kuma** is an editorial director of a newspaper.

- ● I like to tell my Taipei friends stories about people and events in Hong Kong.
- ● I have been to Taipei three times and I like the unique atmosphere of the coffee houses, the peach blossom trees, Shihlin and Japanese-style department stores.

◀**Fannie** is a museum clerk.

- ● I wanted to go to the Ali Mountains.
- ● Taipei does not give me a good impression because of the smoggy air. I don' like the food either but the people are warm and friendly. like Hualien and Chiufen best with their beautifu natural scenery.

▶**Alice** manages an upmarket glassware store.

- ● I often come to Taipei for business, glass blowing and sightseeing.
- ● The well-equipped glass blowing workshops in Taipei are much cheaper than those in Europe and Japan.

▶**Mr. He** is a clerk.

- ● I first went to Taiwan several years ago because the Taiwan dollar was depreciated at that time.
- ● I do not have a deep impression on Taipei, but it has many things that Hong Kong does not have, such as bookstores, hot springs in Yangmingshan, the Palace Museum and fresh water.

▲**Ken, Gina and Bond**

- 🔴 Ah Ken (left) went to Taiwan to get close to nature.
- 🟢 My friends and I loved travelling through in the woods on the train and watching the sunrise.
- 🔴 Gina (middle) went to Taiwan to taste the delicious food.
- 🟢 The night market is a good place to eat. The steamed stuffed buns of Dingtaifeng are very popular, and you should not miss the tasty carambola juice.
- 🔴 Bond (right) went to Yangmingshan with her friend who studied in Taipei Culture University many years ago and stayed in the house of a farmer for several months, a time she much enjoyed.
- 🟢 In Taipei, you do not have to go to the famous scenic spots. Staying in the mountain area we wandered through the countryside or fed peacocks with the farmers. Sometimes in the day, we soaked in the hot springs or hung out in tea houses (where folk singers often played for free) or visited artists.

▲**Ah Qin** is a wooden puppet master

- 🔴 I studied in Taipei for six years.
- 🟢 Taiwan people are open-minded; they offer a good environment for artists and bring hope for society.

▶**Stephenie** is a freelance publisher.

- 🔴 To learn handicrafts from aboriginal inhabitants.
- 🟢 When you are in Taipei you will know more about the evolution of the local culture but its distinctive features are still modern.

◀**Queenie** is a housewife.

- 🔴 I once studied in Taipei.
- 🟢 The rich culture, local customs and delicious food of Taiwan are fascinating.

▲**Wynnie** likes to travel.

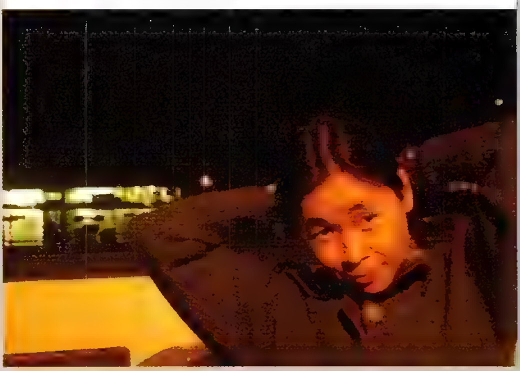
- 🔴 I went to Taipei for the first time in 1998 to learn how to travel solo.
- 🟢 The warmth and solicitude of the Taiwan people left a deep impression on me. I once missed a regular bus and a restaurant waitress offered me a free dinner and drove me to nearby scenic spots and finally to the bus station. And I also got to know a hotel manager who offered his house free to stay because his hotel was full at that time, and he worried about me staying in the railway station alone. The hospitality and friendship of Taiwan people cannot be expressed in a few words.

▶**Yammie** is an accounts clerk.

- 🔴 I went to Taipei because my friends told me it was rich in culture.
- 🟢 It looks like Hong Kong in the 1970s and is a little more backward than I expect. But I haven't been to the commercial centre yet. The bookstore culture deserves commendation.

▼**Miss Zhang** is a senior reporter in Hong Kong.

- 🔴 The hot spring and theatres are attractive.
- 🟢 Taipei is rich in culture and even the taxi drivers in Taipei are concerned about politics.



◀**Martin** from Hong Kong came for the book fair in Taipei.

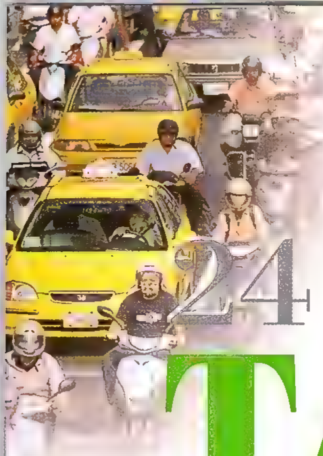
- 🔴 I came to Taipei mainly to taste the delicious food.
- 🟢 Great food!

▼**Lilian and Wendy** are visitors to Taipei.

- 🔴 This is our first time here.
- 🟢 Taipei is close so it is convenient and the food is delicious.

▶**Mr. Zhang** works in the information technology field in Taipei.

- 🔴 I graduated from a university in Taipei and then found a job here.
- 🟢 Taipei has both the prosperity of an international metropolis and the quietness of the countryside. Coffee houses, teahouses and bookstores are everywhere and people can enjoy a peaceful cultural environment in the noisy city.



24 Hours in TAIPEI

Article by Huang Liru

1

23:59 ➠ 00:00

As the digital timer at City Square switches from 23:59 to four zeros, neon lights flash, people go about their business...

2:15 Bookworms Never Sleep

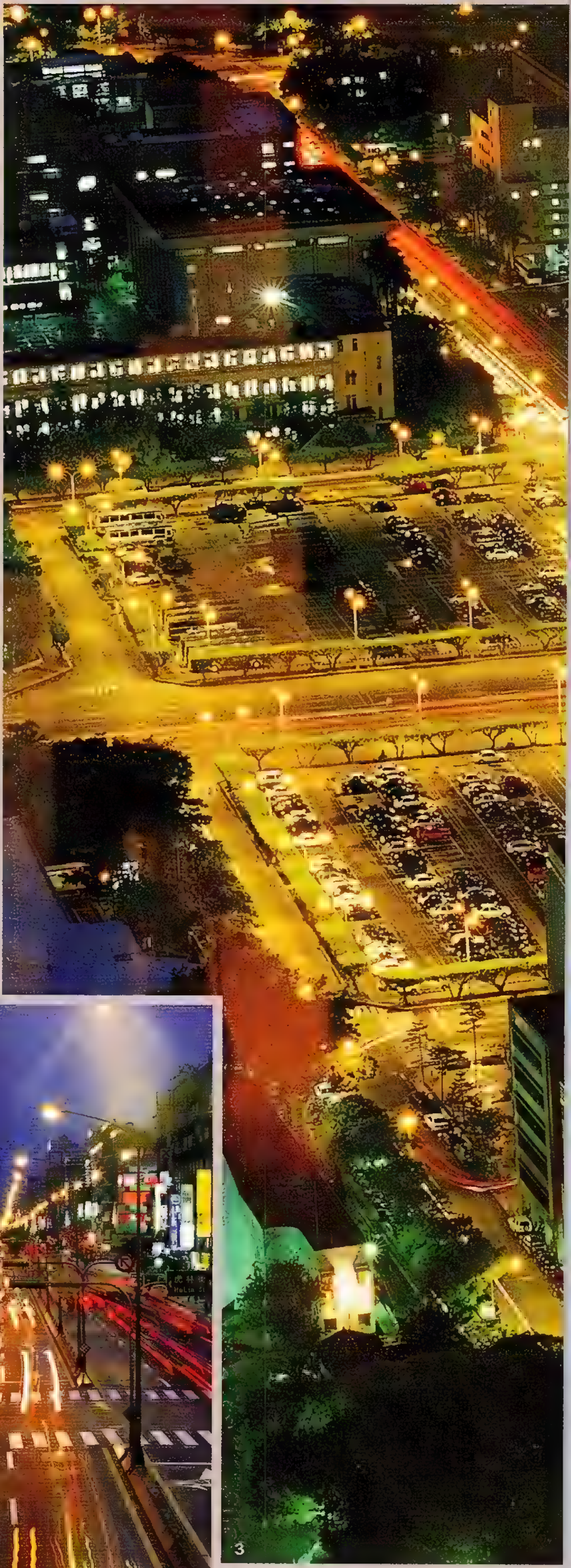
Taking a leisurely browse through a large bookstore, enjoying the books and the aroma of fresh coffee, accompanied by the soft music of a string orchestra. Some night owls linger at the U-shaped magazine stand, journeying in their imaginations with travel magazines. Lovers recline on the stairs, flipping through coffee-table books on home decoration, weaving their dream life together. Young women gather around the health section, and babble excitedly about different dieting methods.

Sleepless Taipeinese are lured naturally the bookstores, where they find their dreams between the pages of books.

4:15 City without an Expiry Date

Meticulously, Ming-Yuan takes stock of the 2,000 kinds of goods in the convenience store. Items past their expiry dates are dumped in a basket; things soon to be expired are brought to the front of their shelves. One of Ming-Yuan's routine jobs is to deal with hundreds of commodities that have passed their allotted lifespan. He has to refill items, stick new expiry dates on them, and wait for another stock of goods to phase out. Ming-Yuan recalls his boss saying, "Getting rid of the old is the motivation for a city to improve, the key for economic development."

This city is stuffed with many futile, redundant, expired items ready to be disposed



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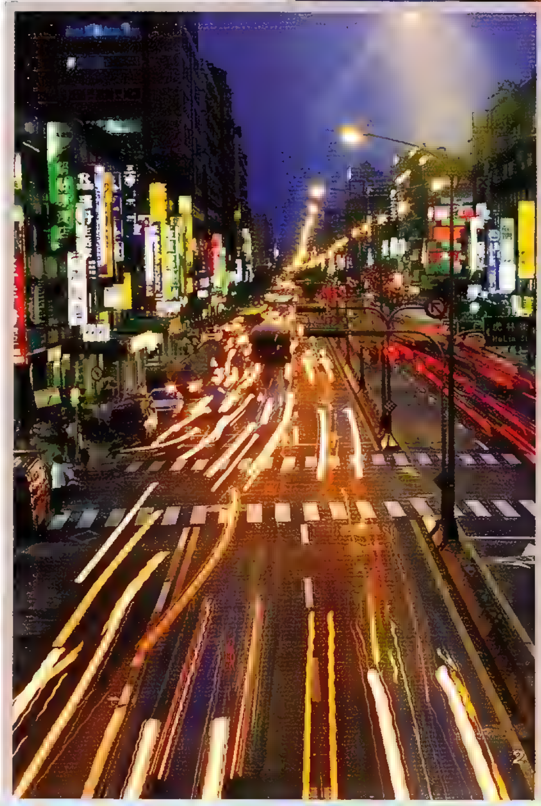

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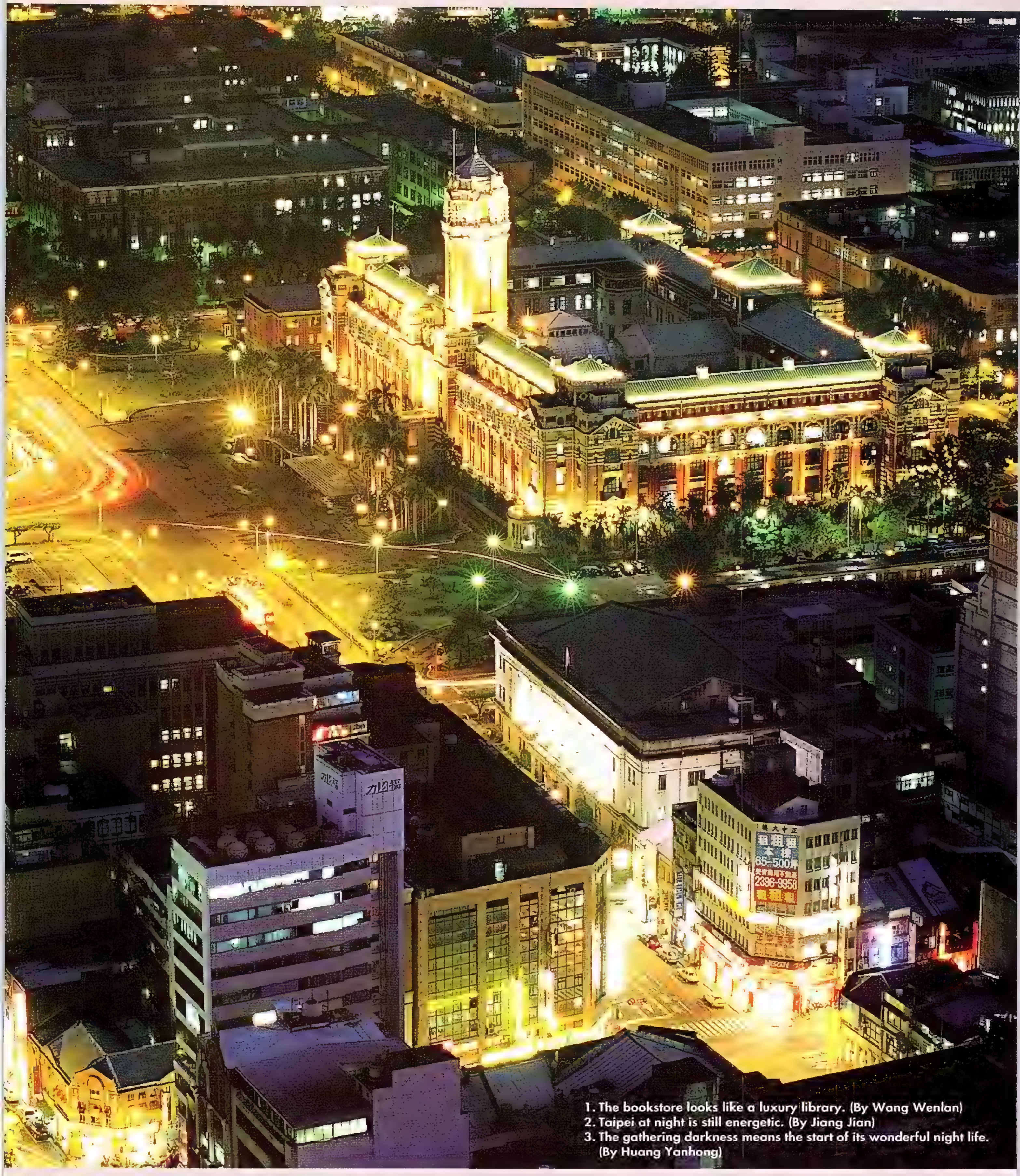


1. The bookstore looks like a luxury library. (By Wang Wenlan)
2. Taipei at night is still energetic. (By Jiang Jian)
3. The gathering darkness means the start of its wonderful night life. (By Huang Yanhong)

24 Hours in
TAIPEI

2

of. The process often takes place in the wee small hours when most people are asleep.

Ming-Yuan pushes the last box of expired goods into the storeroom and the door closes as day breaks.

6:08 Dancing in the Dawn

In the morning breeze, Yu-Wei jogs with his dog Husky along the seashore. It's been a long time since he went jogging so early. Rarely do the first light and fresh air catch his face and lungs. Husky is running in delight, chasing the sunshine. The light reflects off his fur. "Your dog is so cute. These days a dog takes more than raising a kid." A bald elderly man, wearing light running shoes, jogs alongside Yu-Wei. He chatters every now and then.

At dusk, the seashore park becomes a paradise for inline-skaters and slam-dunk wizards; in the morning, it's a sports ground, cultivating long-life, and dotted with old-fashioned radios. A group of mothers were dancing Yuan-Ji (a form of dance combining dancing, martial arts and exercise). On another patch, some 50 people are practicing Tai-Chi, while folk dance music plays nearby. A group of middle-aged women are tap-dancing. A mother wearing neat rose-red lipstick, out of the blue, stops Yu-Wei and shouts, "Young man! Tomorrow we will be dancing the tango, would you like to be my partner?" Yu-Wei smiles bashfully. The sun brightens; more city-dwellers wake up.

8:21 Gossip and Fish at the Market

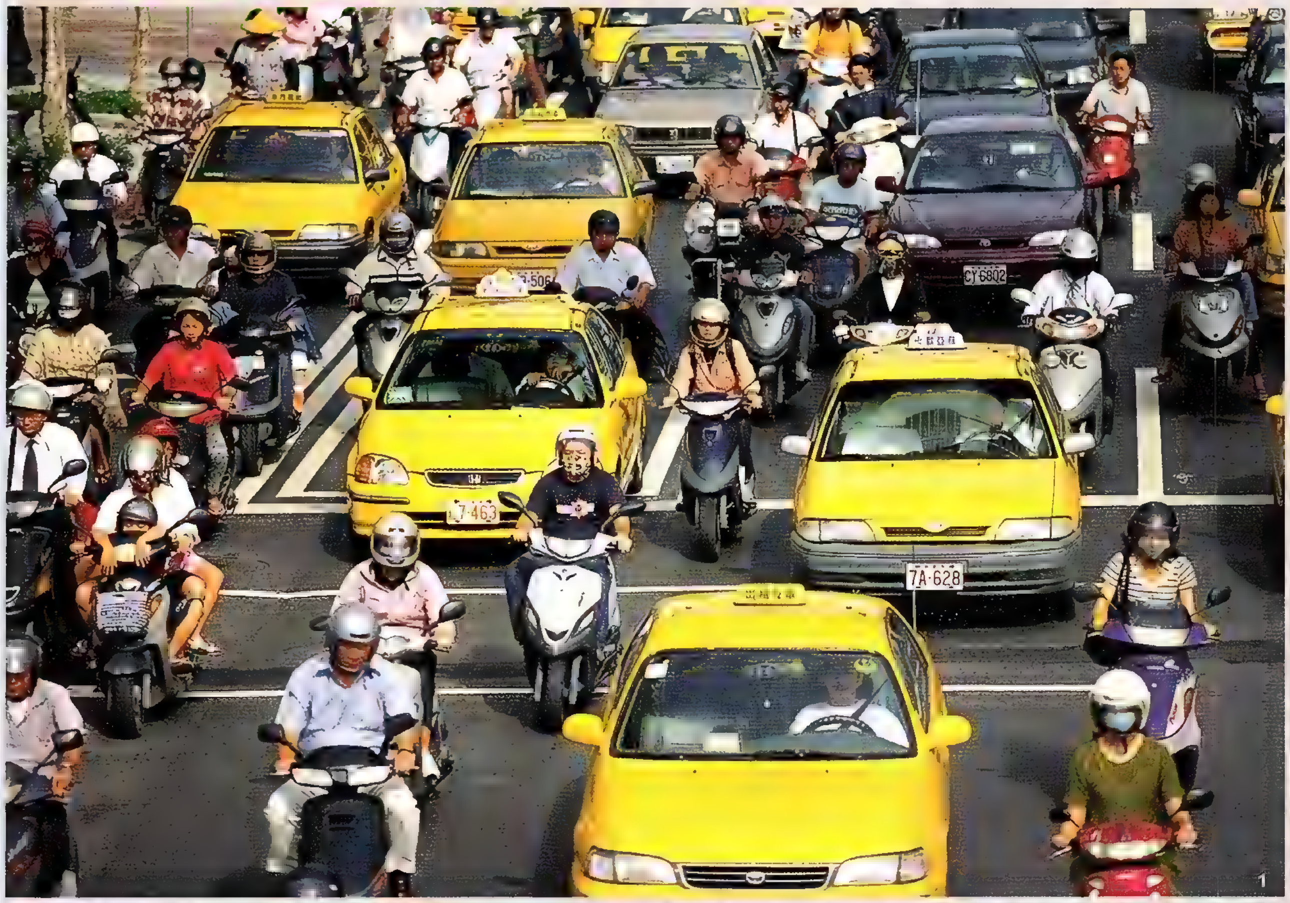
Her child at school, Mrs. Jiang , grocery basket in hand, rides her little motor-scooter to the market. Supermarkets have mushroomed around Taipei, selling fresh meat and vegetables, and food compartments in department stores are filled with international delicacies. Like most housewives, Mrs. Jiang still prefers the traditional markets. Mrs. Jiang gathers a sense of the reality of life in Taipei by breathing in the familiar scent of vegetables and fish in the market.

Grocery basket in hand, Jiang Mama waltzes through the market with other housewives.

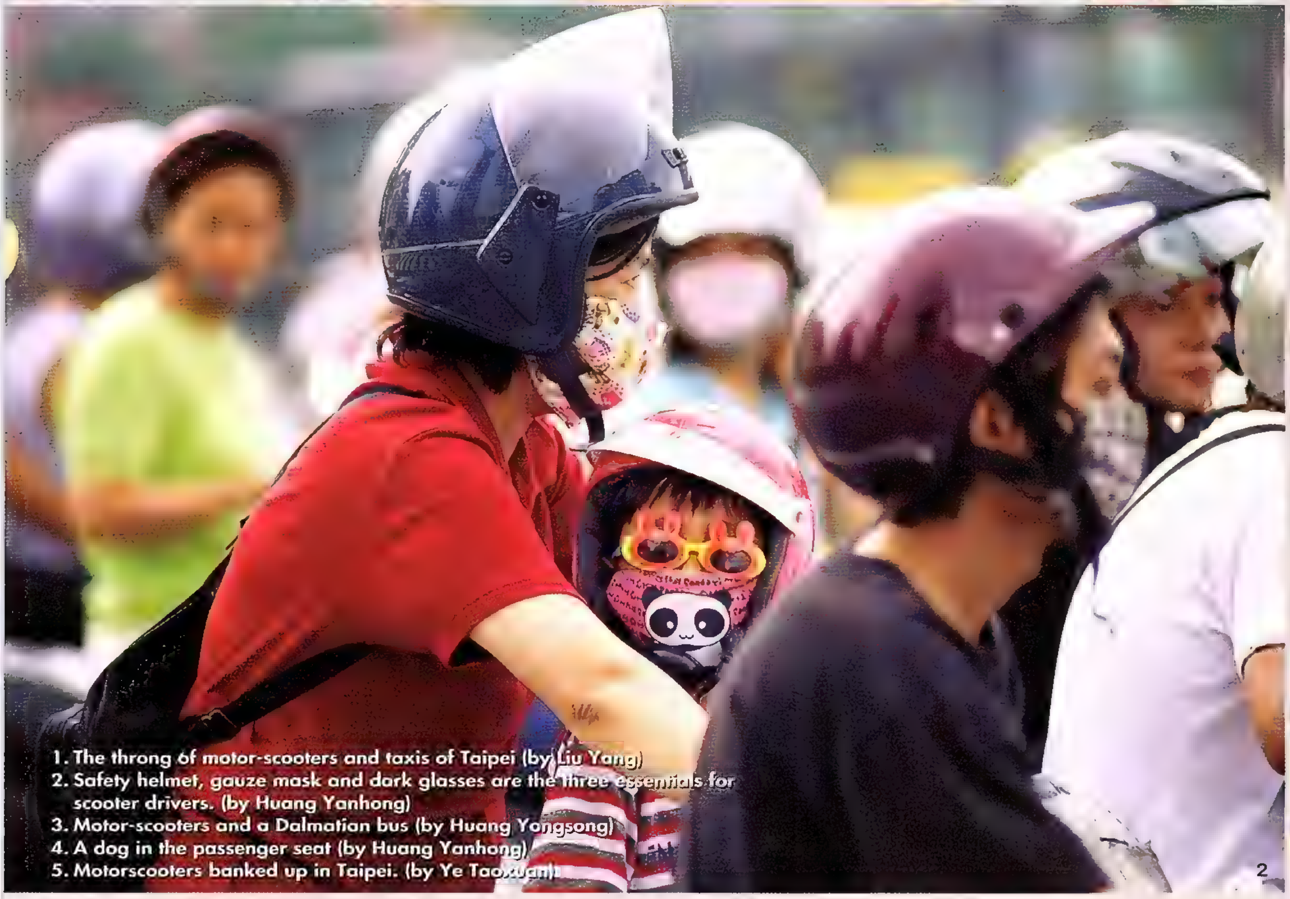
Before leaving, she sips a cup of mian-cha (sweet porridge made from millet). Every time, she says, "The stuff from Tainan is still better." But she goes back for another every day.

1. A park in Taipei (by Liu Yang)
2. Gathering to stretch in the morning (by Ye Taoxuan)
3. Kindergarten children show the Taipei spirit. (by Huang Yanhong)
4. The Taipei 101 mansion — the highest building in the world at 101 storeys — is the new landmark of Taipei. (by Connie)

24 Hours in
TAIPEI



北⟷中壢
飛狗巴士
Fe Go Express



1. The throng of motor-scooters and taxis of Taipei (by Liu Yang)
2. Safety helmet, gauze mask and dark glasses are the three essentials for scooter drivers. (by Huang Yanhong)
3. Motor-scooters and a Dalmatian bus (by Huang Yongsong)
4. A dog in the passenger seat (by Huang Yanhong)
5. Motorscooters banked up in Taipei. (by Ye Taoxuan)

3

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5

24 Hours in TAIPEI

10:52 Living the Hotel Life

The property agent has repeated the usual speech over 57 times. Mei-Jiuan scrutinizes the dollhouse-like showroom flat. The apartment is less than 10 m². Inside, she finds a small living room and a bedroom. On the left is the bathroom, next to a simple kitchen. "It's small, but self-contained. Enough for one person," the agent babbles, following the gaze of Mei-Jiuan. She is very tempted by the hotel-like studio. After struggling in Taipei awhile, she wants a home. "Living here is like living in a hotel everyday. It suits you," the agent said. Mei-Jiuan eyes the room again for some time. "Is money a problem? All you need is NT $200,000. Now the prime rate is really low. The earlier you buy, the better. Let me work it out for you." The agent, calculator in hand, begins number-crunching. Mei-Jiuan chuckles, "Let me think about first."

This is the sixth showroom flat she has seen. Every time, she feels compelled to buy it. Yet, whenever the agent recites the line "living here is like living in a hotel" Mei-Jiuan backs off. She wants a home, not a hotel. She dreams about a bungalow with no elevator. There should be a few rooms to meander through.

She knows having such a home in Taipei is just a fantasy. Mei-Juan goes off to visit another studio. Between home and hotel, she tries to strike a balance.

12:41 Out to Lunch....

With his passengers safely dropped off, A-Da pilots his cab to Jin-Hua Street. He queues up with other cabdrivers for a bowl of beef noodles. The bright yellow chain of cabs is the best promotion for the restaurants, since the cluster of cabs would attract other workers.

The beef noodles district on Jin-Hua Street is formed by dwarfish tin and wooden houses. The area has become one of the attractions of Taipei. Workers come by to relax, and drivers to replenish their energy. Braised or stewed, the food is delicious. Lunch doesn't have to be fancy, but it must be filling. Simply having some pig stomach, intestines and ears, boiled in soya sauce is already a satisfying meal.

The little shops are crammed with people. Strangers and friends, everyone sits together. Some enjoy their food alone; some are unstoppable chatterboxes. The steam from the cooking noodles form a haze over Taipei — making it the warmest place at noon.

Stuffed, some drivers resume their game of chess from the day before. Others nap on the wooden benches of the vegetable stands.

A call arrives. A-Da, mouth wiped clean, heads to Fu-Shing South Road to pick up a new fare.

15:49 School's Out

The school bell rings and Zhi Ming skateboards past the school gate. Xiao Wei, from the neighbouring class, cycles alongside. Both roll into the alley behind the school, rushing to a bakery.

2

1. The Taipei streets are good places for young artists to display their talents. (by Chen Haiwen)
2. Schoolchildren begin computer lessons in the third grade. (by Lu Beifeng)
3. Street dancing attracts young people. (by Wen Xiaori)
4. The hair salon also offers Internet service. (by Huang Yanhong)

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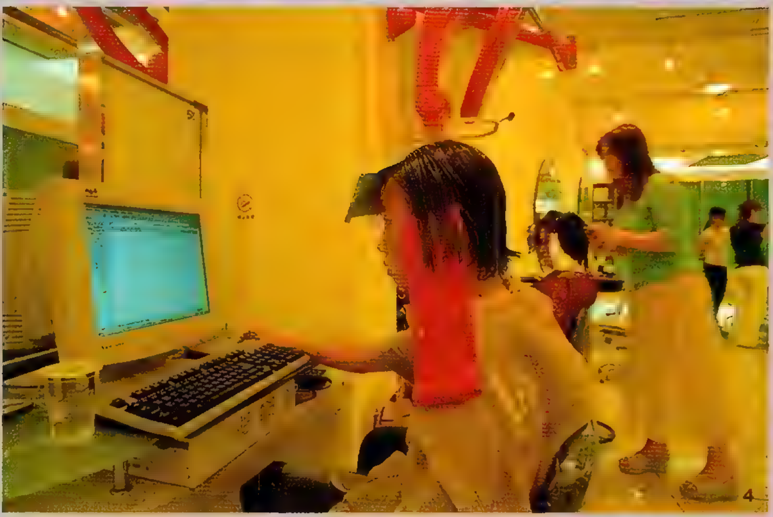

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24 Hours in
TAIPEI

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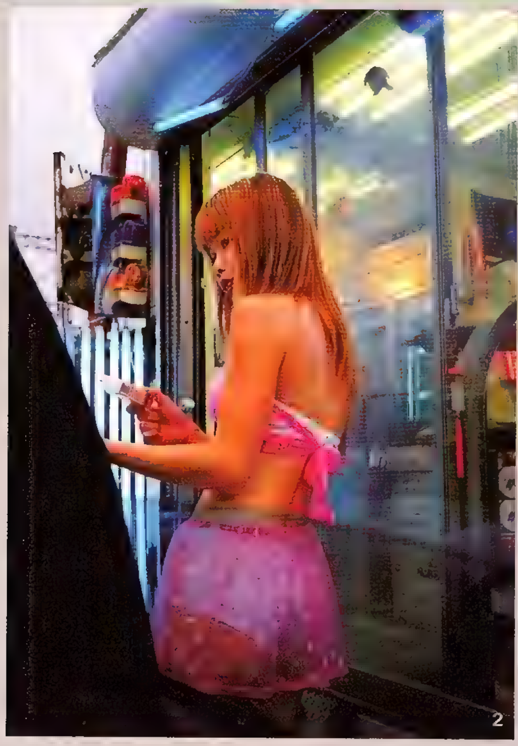

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Fresh bread, buns and cakes come out of the bakery ovens at 4 p.m. every day. Zhi Ming takes a hot pineapple bun, munching on it while paying. "Take your time. It's very hot, right out of oven," the girl at the bakery warns. Shiau-Wei buys a bun filled with strawberry jam, which he slurps out. On the bench outside the bakery sit two girls, wearing plaits. Under the warm sun, they chew on greasy onion buns. It is a time to relax before the after-school tutorials. The oil from the onion bun drips on to their pleated skirts, which causes them some consternation. Yet, the snack is a great relief after a two-hour maths lesson.

"Skip the tutorial today. Let's go to the river bank to play soccer," Xiao-Wei suggests. Zhi Ming has no response, but skateboards after Xiao-Wei's bike. Both roll down to the river, glittering in the sunset.

16:31 Motorcycle Madness

Old Li puts the courier documents into a big plastic waterproof school bag. He starts the engine of his Jockey 125, and quickly joins the streams of motor-scooters. He exhilarates in shooting around traffic-jam-free Taipei (although most foreigners find it tricky). Drivers waggle across the city that is woven by narrow alleys.

Peak time for couriers starts at 4 p.m. Everyone wants their packages delivered before the end of the day. The phone rings more frequently as the day comes to an end, and the voices get more impatient. Old Li is used to all this. One leg on the brake pedal, the other on the curb, Old Li jots down addresses and telephone numbers. It is normal to rush around all directions in Taipei three or four times a day.

In Taipei, Old Li says, one can run a business with a mobile phone. No need to go to the office.

18:32 Happy Together

The MRT train at nightfall is crammed to capacity with exhausted, but happy commuters. Ching-Yun feels release when stepping out of the office. His mobile phone is turned off to cut out any connection with his colleagues. Ching-Yun sways with other strangers on the moving MRT. Four sweaty teenagers lean against the train door. They are discussing a basketball match they have just played. Three office girls are squeezed in the crowd, flipping through gourmet magazines looking for places to eat out. A child grips his mom's hand tightly in fear that he may be swept away by the waves of passengers.

The train door opens and closes constantly. Human waves drift in and out, watching the city fly past.

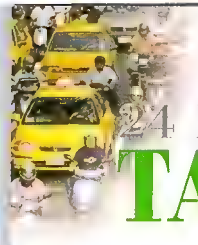
19:30 City as a Stage

Yi-Yun and Je-Sheng meet at the bookstore at the National Theatre at 7:15 p.m. They are to see a play at 7:30 p.m.

Young faces in the audience cheer, all applaud.

4

1. **A binglang stores at the roadside hire many young women. (By Lu Beifeng)**
2. **"Areca beauties" attract motorists with their scanty outfits. (By Huang Yongsong)**
3. **Tattoos are popular among young people. (By Chen Haiwen)**
4. **Living Mall has set up more than 1,000 shops. (By Guo Jingwen)**



24 Hours in TAIPEI

All over Taipei, artistic performances are being staged. The Greek tragedy Agamemnon is staged in a deserted and derelict winery. On the second floor of Da-Dao-Cheng historic community, the Brecht play, Mother Courage and Her Children, is performed. The audience sits on the floor, leaning against each other. On the second floor of the old police station, in the cellar of a bookstore, on the third floor of a concrete building, at the pub on Kong-Koan Street , on the hill of Guan-Du, in the teahouse at Mu-Zha — in all possible venues — performances go on and on.

21:20 Washing Cares Away

Dinner is late because most people finish work late. Nine to five, an eight-hour day, is a luxury. Most companies work on the "liability system": so long as you have done your work, you can go. But the work never ends. Many Taipeinese fall into the trap.

"I really don't want to work like this. It's no life at all," Mei-Huei mutters, stirring the mushroom hotpot. "Remember the great old times when we three were at high school? Life was so carefree in Tai-Dung," sighs Chian-Ying, sipping the soup. "Did we study so hard in the past to toil our lives away now?" Her chin resting on her palm, A-Fang glares at the rain outside the bamboo curtains. The wind brings along the scent of the hot spring.

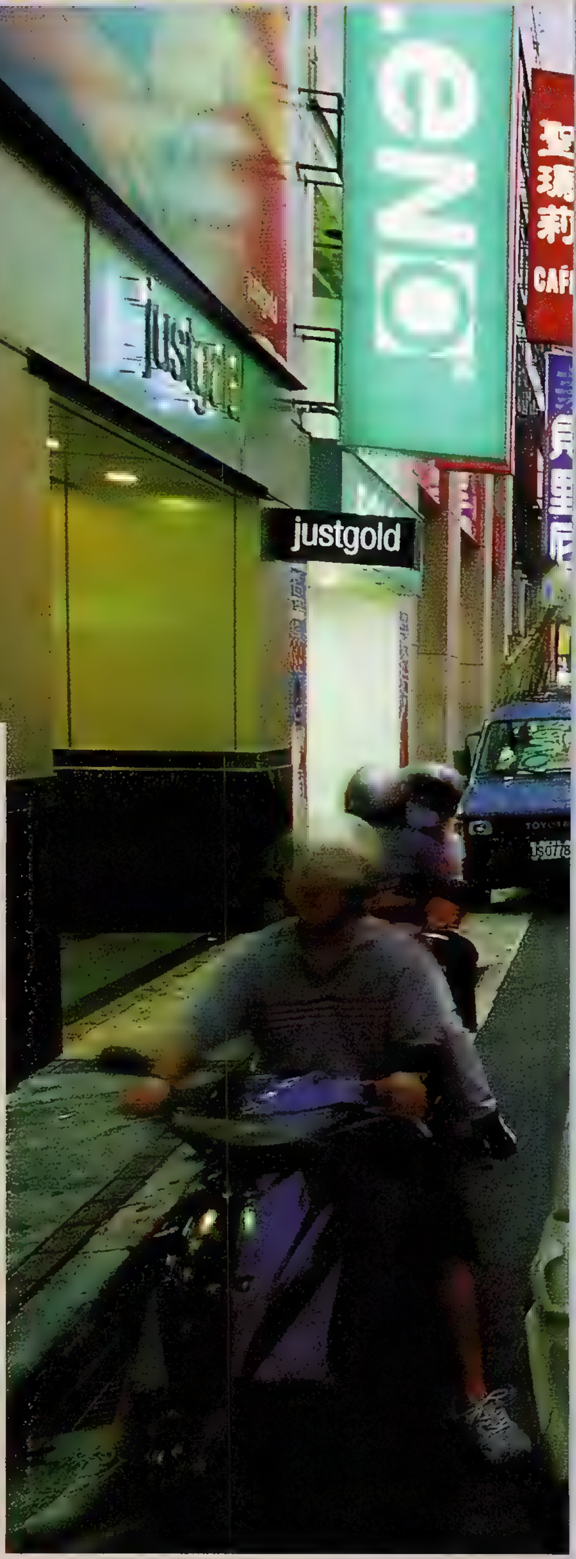
The mushroom hotpot continues to boil with the ceaseless conversations of the women. Exhausting work, romance, forlorn lives — they are sick of the city. Yet, they cannot live without it.

The city seems to offer intangible opportunities and sudden surprises. "Perhaps there is still hope," A-Fang declares.

It gets windier. "Let's go to the hot spring!" Mei-Huai suggests.

They silently soak themselves in the semi-open hot spring tub. It is a soothing moment. Beads of perspiration rest gently on their foreheads.

The rain stops. They lie on the smooth rock of

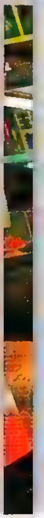


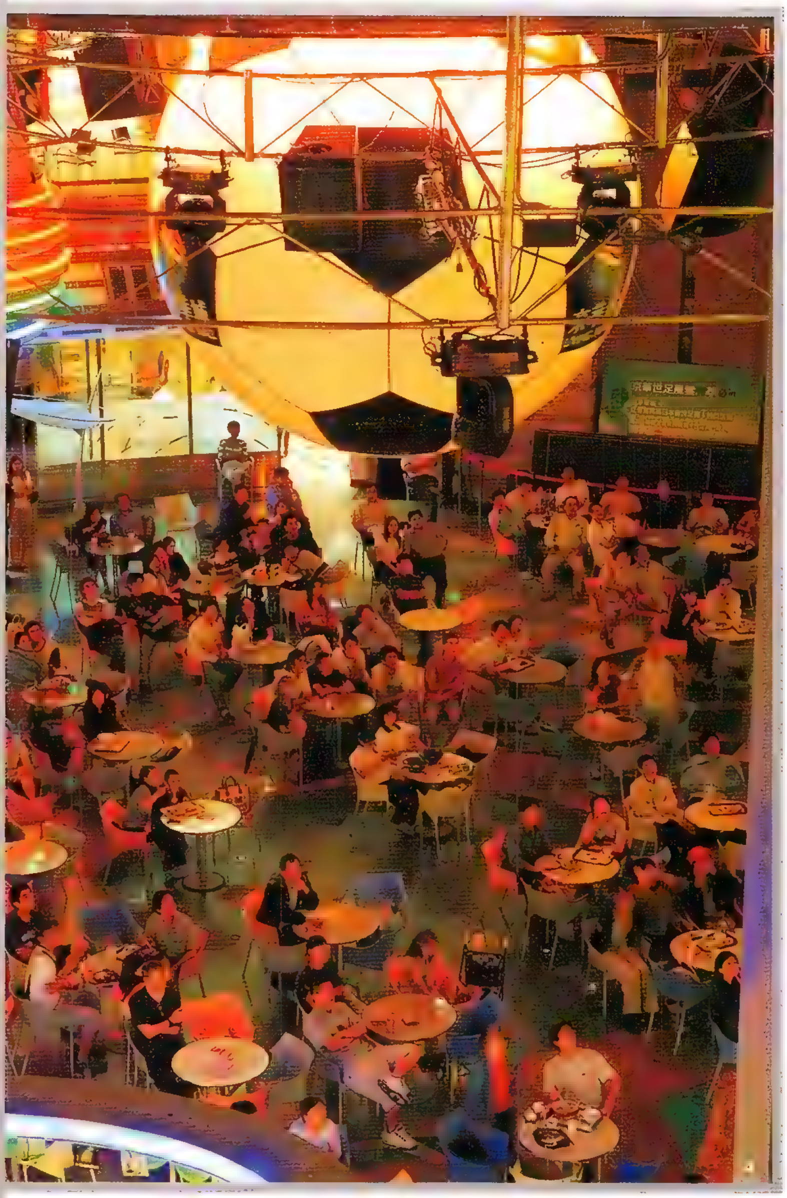
1. Traffic after work (by Lin Boliang)
2. A police officer carries out breathalyser tests on motorists. (by Wei Zhide)
3. Young women offer sacrifices in the ancient Baoan Temple. (by Wei Zhide)
4. The lights are bright on the streets of Taipei at night. (by Jiang Jian)

頂呱呱
三輪車
泡沫紅茶
餐飲廣場
2F
HANG TEN
GIORDANO
WHY AND
迷你小火鍋
咖啡鮮果汁
39元
4

1. Shoe stores offer a wide range of choices at the night market. (by Lu Beifeng)
2. Taiwan people like to pray for the blessings of Buddha. Some people even believe that removing body mole could change their fate. (by Huang Yoingsong)
3. Specialty snacks of Taipei are popular. (by Lin Boliang)
4. Watching the football game while eating out (by Lin Boliang)

2





the tub, looking up at the sky. The clouds dissipate slowly, giving way to a new moon. Between the tree branches, the moonlight softly showers the hot tub.

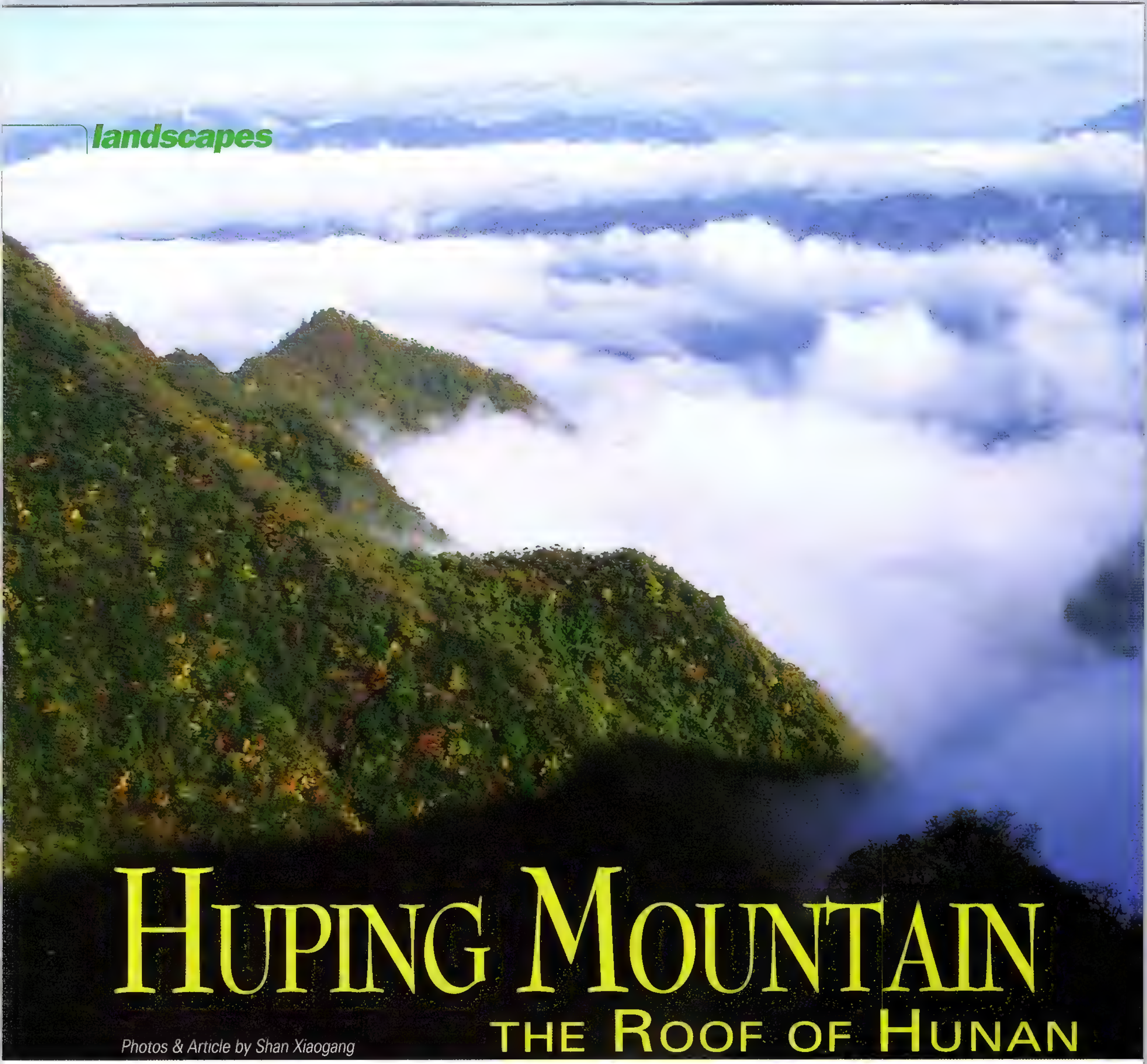
22:41 Pop till You Drop

At ten past, most city-dwellers are off work. Inside the singing chamber, they burn out their last drops of energy. The karaoke hall is jammed with people. All walks of life gather here, ready to plunge into enclosed black boxes. They just want to shout at the top of their lungs. "Sing till you drop," Shiau-Gao cries.

Pop music is the number one panacea of city life. Suffering, sadness, sorrow — all are soothed by melodies. People get their comfort from KTV.

Leaving this box, it's another bright new day in Taipei.

About the author: Huang Liru likes travelling, but loves the calmness and quietness after a journey. She is a reporter of the Tourism Department of the China Times.



HUPING MOUNTAIN

THE ROOF OF HUNAN

Photos & Article by Shan Xiaogang

Huping (kettle and bottle) Mountain is about 100 km north of the well-known Zhangjiajie Scenic Area in Hunan Province. Its main peak—2,098 m above sea level—makes it the highest in the province, and therefore it is often known as the "Roof of Hunan".

Perhaps overshadowed by the fame of its neighbouring Zhangjiajie, Huping Mountain has remained hidden away quietly over the years, little known to the public.

2

Huping Mountain is a state-level nature reserve and its subtropical forests are well protected. Of its 6,500 known species, 90 are classified as rare and endangered species which are under key state-level protection.

The mountain stands out for its waterfalls, deep secluded gorges, limestone caves and wonderful peaks.

SECLUDED GORGES

Leaving the Trunk Gully comes the Jinjia River Gorge. The river is a wonder of nature, for its source is a great limestone cave at the foot of a mountain. Floodwater would run off and rush out of this cave, throwing skywards in the twinkling of an eye.

The Guancai (Coffin) Gorge is a strange place, for the cliffs on both sides run straight and parallel. Water flows slowly below on the flat riverbed that covered with small broken cobbles. Here, trees carpet the valley and block out the sunlight.

1. The mountain range from Beifengya under Huping summit
2. The golden pheasant with a red belly
3. The thrill of rafting in the gorge
4. Green leaves against a waterfall

BRILLIANT WATERFALLS

At Xiangbizigou (Trunk Gully), the scene opens up as the gorge narrows. The swift current rushes forward with a roar at the bottom of the winding, rock-strewn gorge.

First to come into sight are the small and beautiful Tongzi (Lad) Falls, tuck away modestly under the cover of trees. Further down the gully the Liuyan Falls roll snakelike over the rocks. Then come the Xiannu (Fairy Maiden) Falls hiding deep in their inland fjord.

And finally the Daling Falls that drop the greatest height. It is rare to have so many distinctive waterfalls in a single gully of just a few kilometres.

MYSTERIOUS CAVES

Chuanshan and Qiaoke Caves lie about one kilometre apart. Each is about one kilometre long and runs right through the mountain.

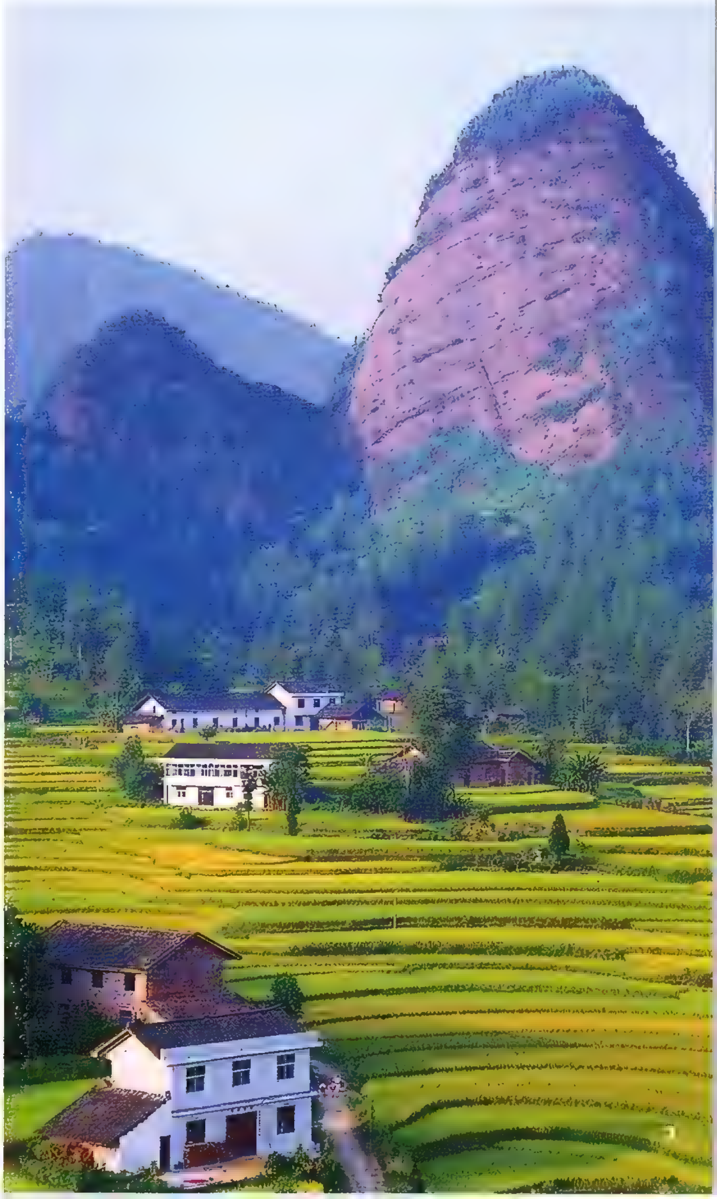
A hidden stream runs through the limestone Chuanshan Cave. It has a vast chamber capable of holding 10,000 people, and it produces deep, sonorous and far-reaching echoes.

Qiaoke Cave has many stalactites. At the end of the cave there is a circular arched section between 100 and 200 m long. It looks like the body of a dragon. Here the cave roof is covered with scale-shaped patterns. At the cave mouth there is a glossy blue cliff. In the rainy season a waterfall flows along the cliff and into the cave. It is then that sunshine makes a rainbow giving the illusion of a dragon crawling into the cave.

ON THE SUMMIT

Huping summit, the main peak, is known as the "Roof of Hunan". Only from Songshuping, on the southwest side of the mountain, can one get the best view of the kettle shape of the summit. The mountain gets its name from the bottleneck-shaped basin that sits on top of the summit. Rare and precious plants, including Auriculata, alpine oak, hornbeam and boxwood grow in this basin. At the bottom of the basin is a primitive forest as high as a two-story building. The ancient moss-covered vines here have had the years to grow thick. Arrow bamboo growing in thickets conceals cracks and fissures in the rock; no one knows how deep they are. The unique topography and geography on this mountaintop have created a micro-environment where an ancient woodland has survived and flourished.

Translated by Chen Qiuping

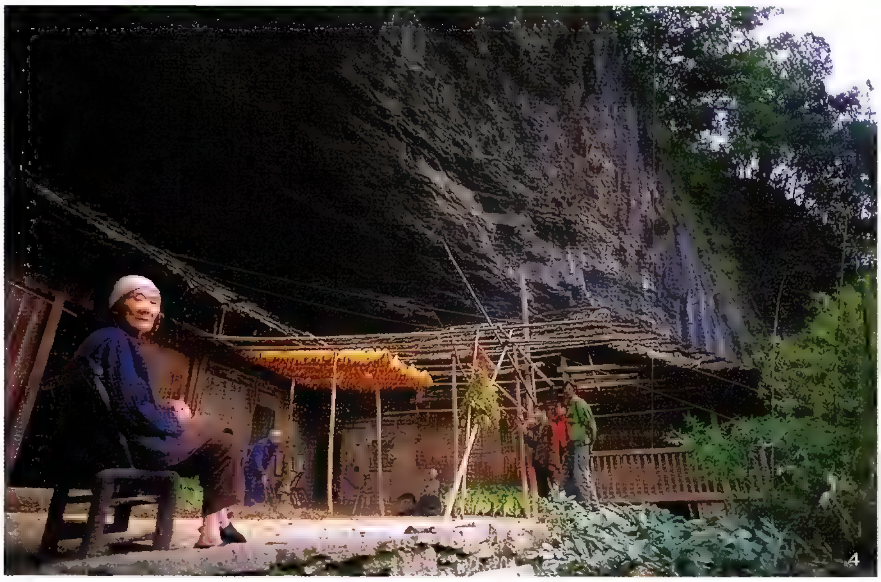


A HOUSE INSIDE A CAVE

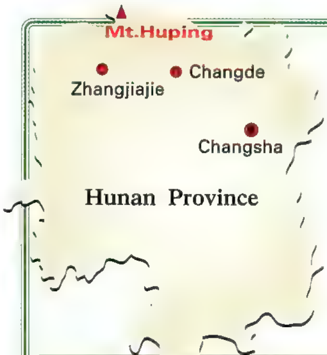
Most of the local residents are from the Tujia ethnic group and live in traditional wooden houses (diaojiaolou) built on wooden stakes. Some people have even built their houses inside the large caves. One such village is Dayajian by the Beixi River, and it is a village of just a few families.

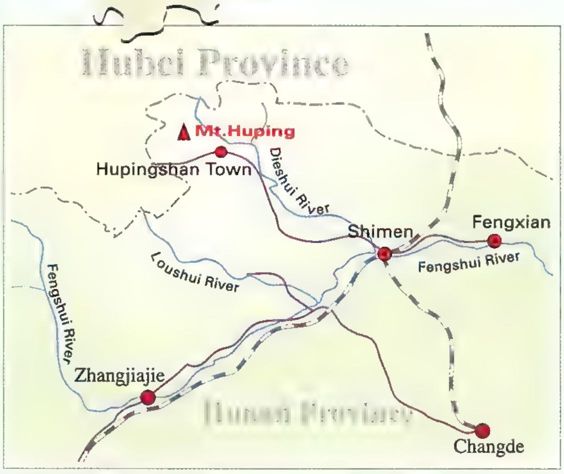
Guided by a villager, I look eastwards towards a large diaojiaolou that has been built in a cave under a high cliff at the east end of the village. Completely shielded from the rain by palisades, the house needs only the thin bark of a China fir for the roof. A clump of bamboo and trees can screen the house at the front.

Inside the house are timber-framed rooms. The upper floor are the living and sleeping rooms while the ground floor is for the livestock. There are several other small caves at the southern side. They are used as a pigpen, toilet and storage room. The wide space behind the house is used for curing tobacco. At the northern side of the house, a bamboo pipe brings clear spring water right into the kitchen.



1. **The crescent mouth of Qiaoke Cave**
2. **The large Huping azalea**
3. **Huping mountain surrounded by terraced fields**
4. **Home is in a cave for Tujia villagers.**
5. **Visitors enjoy a bonfire at the Taibai Chaotang hostel.**





Travel Tips

Transport:

You can fly to Zhangjiajie or take a flight or train to Changsha, then by air-conditioned tourist train to the county seat of Shimen (original station). From Shimen you can take a taxi (about 150 yuan*) or the long-distance shuttle bus service to Hupingshan Town where the nature reserve is located. Once in the reserve there are motor tricycles and jeeps to take you to the various scenic spots, or from where the highway ends, you can visit the mountain on foot.

Accommodation:

Except for the week-long May 1st (Labour Day) and October 1st (National Day) holidays, accommodation is readily available on request at discounted rates. Hotels, guesthouses and holiday inns in Hupingshan town, Shenjingzhai and Jiangping charge 60 to 260 yuan per room. Local villagers also provide accommodation in their diaojiaolou or wooden houses at a negotiated price of about 10 to 30 yuan per room. The meals are Hunan cuisine with a Tujia flavour. The local specialties include tea, medicinal herbs, oranges, tangerines and pilose antler.

Information:

Huping Mountain Reserve Administration Tel: (0736) 542 2413
Shimeng County Tourism Bureau Tel: (0736) 533 5164

* US $ 1 ~ 8 yuan

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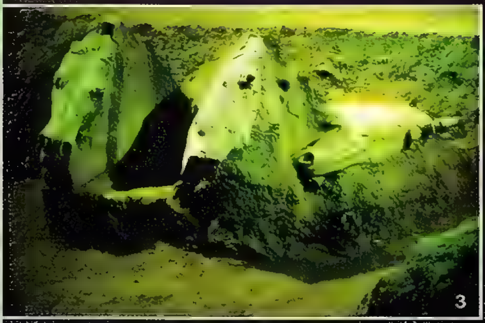

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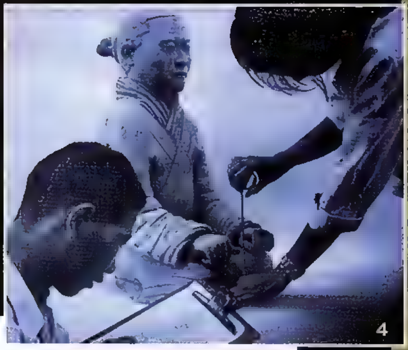

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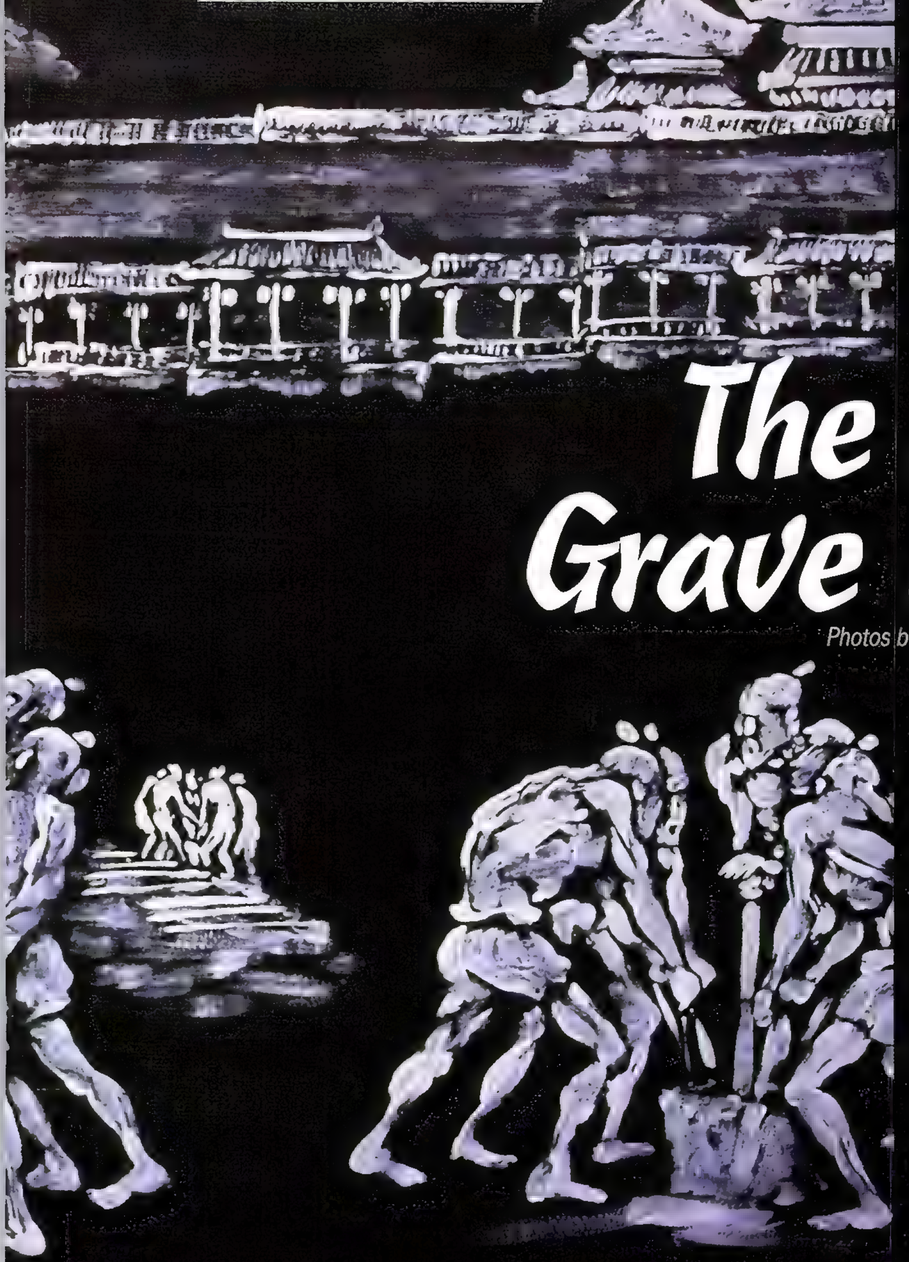


1

The Art of Grave Robbery

Photos by Qiu Ziyu & Shi Baoxiu   Article by Ding Ye

In the dead of night on the outskirts of the ancient capital of Xi'an, shadows have been moving among the graves of ancient emperors, generals and ministers.... The heads of terracotta figures at Qin Shi Huang (first Emperor of Qin Dynasty from 259 - 210 BC) Mausoleum have disappeared. Nude figurines of the Han Dynasty (206 BC - AD 220) have unexpectedly appeared on the other side of the Pacific Ocean. Moreover, bronze wares of the Zhou Dynasty (c. 11th century - 221 BC), tri-coloured glazed pottery of the Tang Dynasty (618 - 907), pottery of Yaozhou Kiln of the Song Dynasty (960 - 1279) were all swallowed in an undercurrent surging out of the country in the dark...

1. Most imperial mausoleums, no matter how meticulously designed and solidly constructed, cannot escape the grave robbers.
2. 3. The excavation of Qin Shi Huang's terracotta warriors and horses at its early stage.
4. The excavation of Qin Shi Huang's terracotta figurines in the 1980s.
5. After an attempted robbery, the Archaeological Institute organised farmers to clear the shaft of the tomb gallery.

1

2

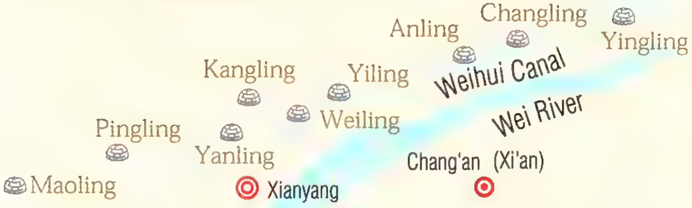
On the moonless, windy night of December 30, 1994, in the wake of a loud muffled sound breaking the still of the night, an earthen column shot into the sky at the southern side of the Jingling Mausoleum — the mausoleum of Li Huan, Emperor Xizong of the Tang Dynasty — in Qianxian County, Shaanxi Province. It indicated the start of another robbery of an ancient imperial tomb. The culprits explored a 16-m deep hole and broke into the grave. When police and personnel from the cultural relics department arrived at the scene, the robbers had already made their getaway. The mausoleum ended up severely damaged. To save the cultural relics in the grave, the Archaeological Research Institute of Shaanxi Province undertook a salvage excavation of the mausoleum. This revealed that the mausoleum had been robbed many times, and it happened practically in every dynasty.

Dying to Get Rich

His crime began on the night of February 27, 1987, the first winter after the excavations of the fantastic Qin Shi Huang's terracotta warriors and horses. Wang Gengdi, a farmer from Lintong County, had been planning his escapade during the day. He jumped over the enclosure of the Hall of Qin Shi Huang Terracotta Figures and sneaked into the yard in which the Qin Shi Huang Mausoleum archaeological team was stationed. He broke open the storage room door and stole the head of terracotta general that had just been repaired. Classified as a First Rate, Grade A national cultural relic, the head is one of the 10 detailed terracotta figures of high-ranking officers unearthed from the mausoleum.

Wang Gengdi knew the crime was no ordinary burglary — he had mortgaged his life on the figurehead. He was only 21 years old. Anxious to get rich, he stole and sold cultural relics out of greed. On June 17 that year, when the priceless treasure was about to change hands for the price of 300,000 yuan in Xi'an, police officers disguised as purchasers handcuffed the dealers in a well-executed sting operation.

The Imperial Mausoleums of the Western Han Dynasty



Wang Gengdi became the first robber of cultural relics to be sentenced to death.

The Crime of Centuries

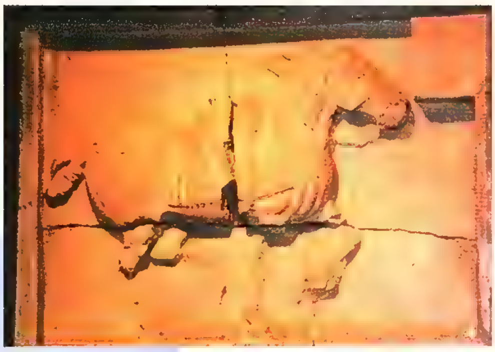
In Chinese history, 13 dynasties set their capitals in Shaanxi and over 80 imperial mausoleums have been confirmed in the province. The number of royal treasures belonging to princes, ministers and generals is countless. The abundant buried gems and relics in the province are beyond imagination.

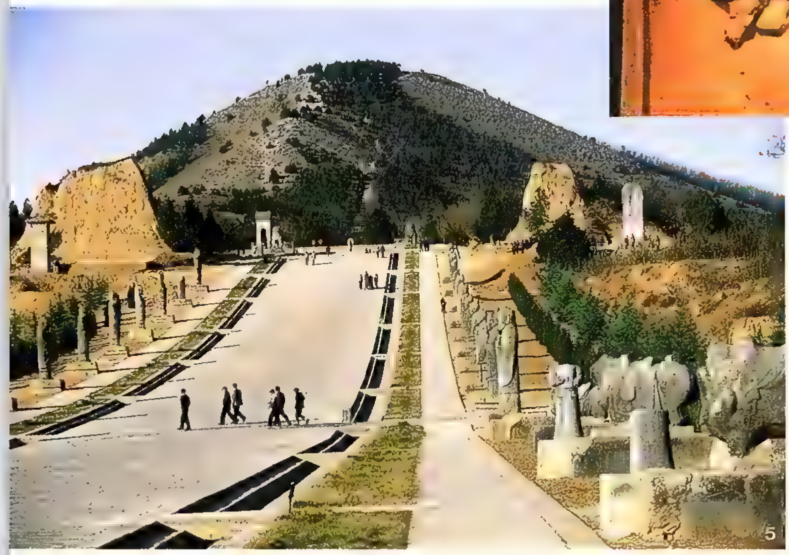
The Zhou Dynasty (1100 BC - 256 BC) maintained a distinct social estate system that decided the arrangement of burial objects. The higher the official, the more the burial objects. The feudal emperors and nobilities never expected that their luxurious burial accessories would become valuable collector items for the later generations and lucrative plunder for grave robbers.

The earliest recorded grave robbery occurred when Xiang Yu (232-202 BC), leader of a peasant revolt, burned down the famous A'fanggong Palace, built during the Qin Dynasty while sending 30,000 men to dig up graves and loot all the burial objects. Unfortunately, the following dynasties carried on the rites of the Zhou. The abundant burial objects have continued to lure the desperate till today.

When Emperor Wudi died, the sacrificial objects were too many to place into his Maoling Mausoleum. In the last years of the Western Han Dynasty, an army of peasant revolutionaries dug up the Han imperial tombs and the Maoling Mausoleum was one of the sites from where thousands of men carried away innumerable objects for weeks after.

Since the 1950s, archaeologists in Shaanxi have been exploring all the imperial tombs in the province. They have found signs of looting in every mausoleum. The mausoleums of the dynasties of Zhou, Han and Tang were the most seriously affected. They found traces of digging and burning in the tomb passage of the Qin Shi Huang Mausoleum. This has been documented in historical records. However, according to the latest archaeological results, it is possible that the break-in did not do too much damage to the inner mausoleum. Qianling Mausoleum is the joint burial place of Tang Emperor Gaozong and Empress Wu Zetian (the only empress in Chinese history). In the second decade of last century, Liu Kan, a Kuomintang warlord, tried to dig up the Qianling Mausoleum, but failed. It is said that large quantities of





1. **The mausoleum of Lord Qin has been robbed over 20 times.**
2. **The head of terracotta general which classified as the Grade A national cultural relic.**
3. **Records show that Qin Shi Huang Mausoleum was sealed with mercury that produced a poisonous gas. This scared away robbers and the tomb was preserved intact.**
4. **One of the stone carvings of the Six Steeds in the Museum of the Forest of Steles in Xi'an.**
5. **Qianling Mausoleum, the burial place of Tang Emperor Gaozu and Empress Wu Zetian, has escaped robbery due to its solid construction.**

shifting sand hampered the digging. In recent years, a trial excavation of the mausoleum revealed that the tomb tunnel slopes. It is 63.1 m long, 3.9 m wide, and paved with thick stone slabs connected with iron bolting sheets. With melted iron poured into the crevices, the tunnel is very solid. There are no traces of digging in the tomb. It is the only well-preserved imperial tomb of the Tang Dynasty.

Broken Horses

Thousands of cultural relics had been unearthed in Shaanxi over the years and grave robbery has been rampant. In former times, there were no laws to forbid tomb excavation, theft, sale or export of cultural relics. Most of the unearthed relics passed through many hands privately. The situation was even worse after the invasion of China by the imperialist powers from the 19th Century. At that time, the famous stone carvings of the "Zhaoling (Zhao Mausoleum) Six Steeds" were stolen.

In 636 (Tang Dynasty), Li Shimin (Emperor Taizong) boasted of his own outstanding military exploits in the founding of the Tang Dynasty and was eager to show off his power. He ordered master artisans to draw patterns of his six battle steeds that he had ridden into battle early in the dynasty and to make relief sculptures on large

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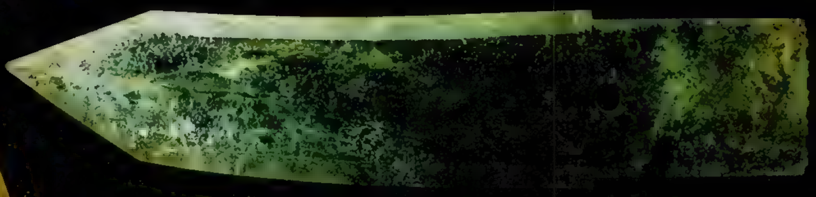
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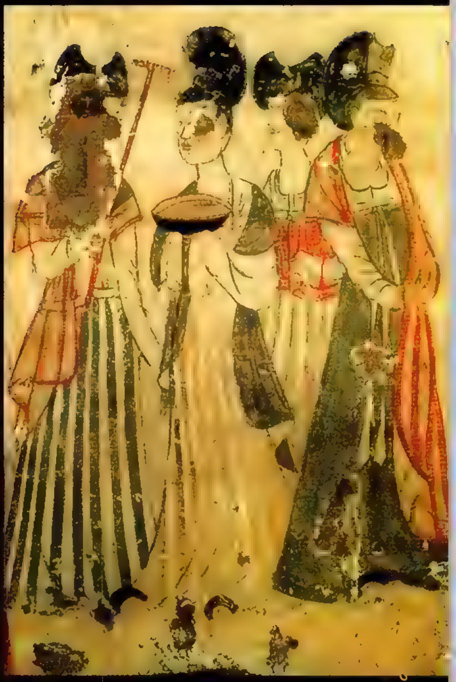
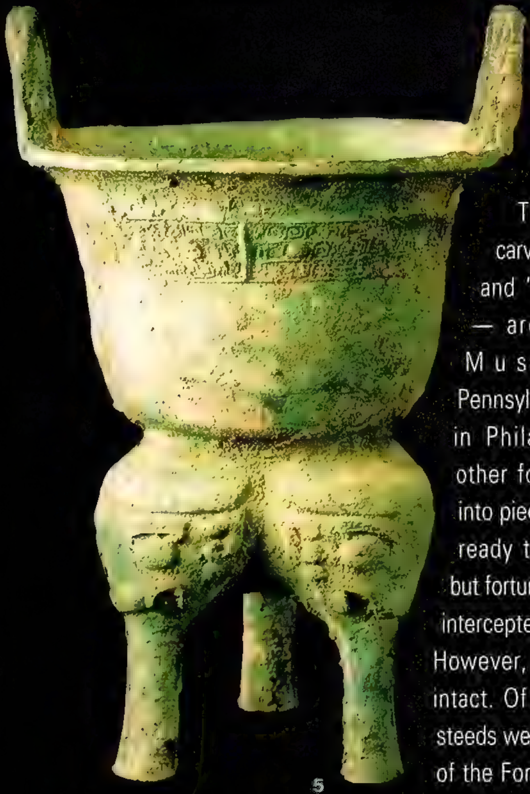


stones. He placed the carvings on display in the northern gate tower on the Zhaoling hill. Both in content and form, the carvings are unique in the history of Chinese sculpture. Drawing in the method of bas-relief from the art of Buddhist sculpture, the steeds differ in posture and disposition, and are unique in style, natural, powerful and liveliness. They are rare treasures of Tang Dynasty stone carving. It was regrettable that these valuable works were stolen and sold in the 1920s. The two best carvings — "Saluzi" and "Quanmaogua" — are now in the Museum of Pennsylvania University in Philadelphia. The other four were sawn into pieces and packed, ready to ship abroad, but fortunately they were intercepted and captured. However, they were not intact. Of the six carved steeds we see in Museum of the Forest of Steles in Xi'an today, Saluzi and Quanmaogua are replicas and the others are pieced together from the fragments of the originals.



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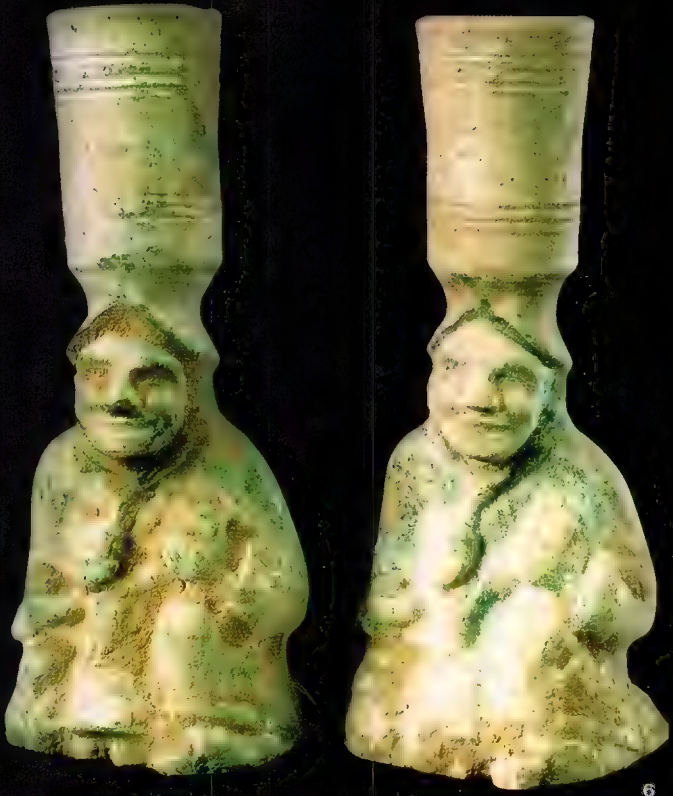

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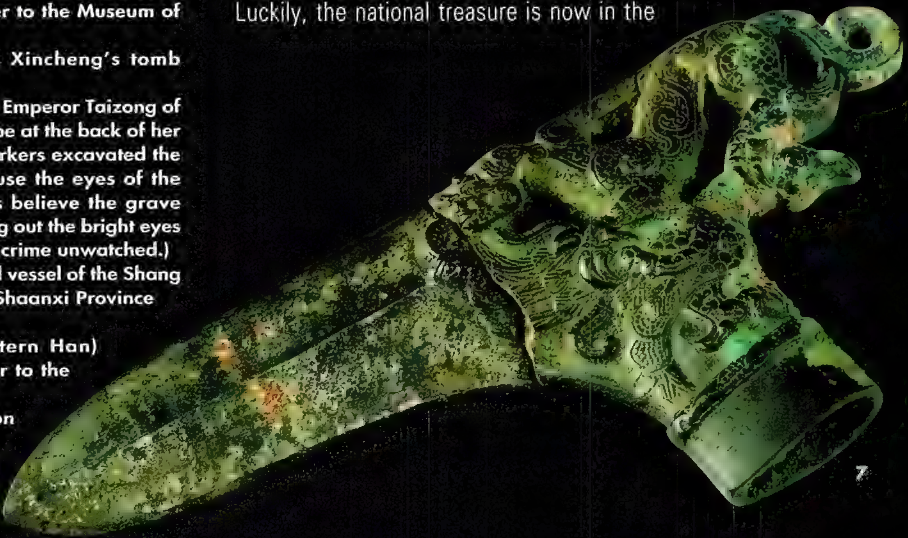
Casualties of War

From the early 1900s to 1949, the warlords battled each other and the nation was in turmoil, allowing ample scope for stealing cultural relics. Most of the booty from Shaanxi was brought to the capital and added to private collections, or sold and exported.

The largest and most valuable bronze in Shaanxi is the "Guo Ji Zi Bai Pan", which was made during the reign of Emperor Daoguang of the Qing Dynasty and later unearthed at Guochuansi, in Baoji. The bronze tray weighs 213.3 kg with 111 characters inscribed on it. Luckily, the national treasure is now in the



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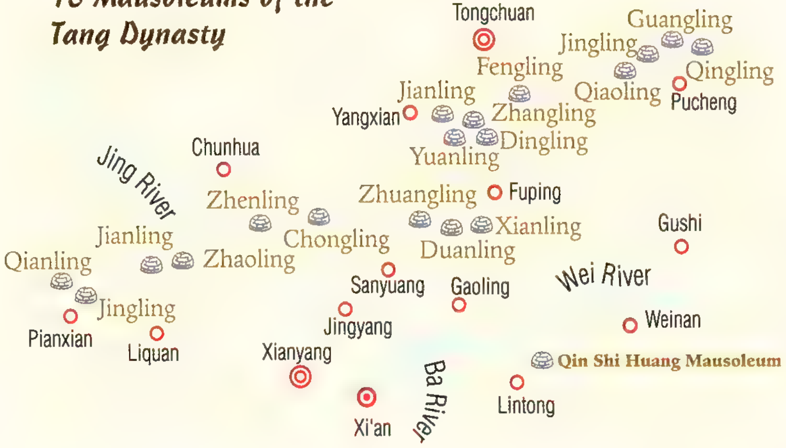
1. **Police seized these painted soldier figurines (Western Han) while investigating grave robberies.**
2. **Jade hook weapon, a burial object of the Shang aristocracy. In 1993, it was seized from smugglers and turned over to the Museum of Shaanxi Province.**
3. **Gilded bronze image of Buddha (Northern Wei - Eastern Wei) intercepted by police in 2000 and turned over to the Museum of Shaanxi Province.**
4. **Mural of maids in a chamber of Princess Xincheng's tomb (excavation for protection).**
   (Princess Xincheng was a daughter of Li Shimin, Emperor Taizong of the Tang Dynasty. Her tomb was built on a slope at the back of her father's mausoleum. When archaeological workers excavated the tomb, they found it had been looted, because the eyes of the women on the mural were dug out. Experts believe the grave robbers were afraid of being found, so they dug out the bright eyes of the palace maids in order to carry out their crime unwatched.)
5. **Bronze tripod with animal mask design, a ritual vessel of the Shang Dynasty aristocracy, given to the Museum of Shaanxi Province by police.**
6. **Green glazed candle stand figures (Eastern Han) recovered by police in 1991 and turned over to the museum.**
7. **Ge with tiger design, a kind of hook weapon possibly belonging to the Spring and Autumn Period and the Warring States Period. Xi'an police seized it from smugglers in 2000 and handed it to the Museum of Shaanxi Province.**

collection of the Museum of Chinese History.

The Maogong Ding (tripod used as cooking vessel) that epigraph experts praise as the greatest treasure was also unearthed in Shaanxi during the Qing Dynasty. With 499 characters inscribed in 32 lines, it has the most characters of any bronze discovered in China. In the early period of 1910s, the bronze vessel was once left as a pledge at Daosheng Bank run by Russians in Tianjin, nearly bought, and taken away by a foreigner. Later, the Palace Museum in Beijing redeemed it, but the Nationalist Party took it to Taiwan before 1949.


18 Mausoleums of the Tang Dynasty
Tongchuan
Guangling
Jingling
Fengling
Qingling
Jianling
Qiaoling
Pucheng
Yangxian
Zhangling
Chunhua
Dingling
Yuanling
Jing River
Zhenling
Zhuangling
Fuping
Jianling
Chongling
Xianling
Gushi
Qianling
Zhaoling
Duanling
Sanyuang
Gaoling
Wei River
Jingling
Jingyang
Weinan
Pianxian
Liquan
Xianyang
Qin Shi Huang Mausoleum
Ba River
Lintong
Xi'an

History for Sale

During the 1950s and 1960s, thanks to the comparatively strict social control and a greater national awareness, the robbery of ancient tombs and the smuggling of cultural relics hardly ever occurred. In Shaanxi, those who earned their living by robbing ancient tombs disappeared. Nonetheless, after the implementation of the reform and opening-up policy, overseas markets have generated an eager demand for China's cultural relics. As a result, the black market has prospered. With imperial tombs of different dynasties scattering around the province, Shaanxi is the principle resource of cultural relics and grave robbery is thriving again.

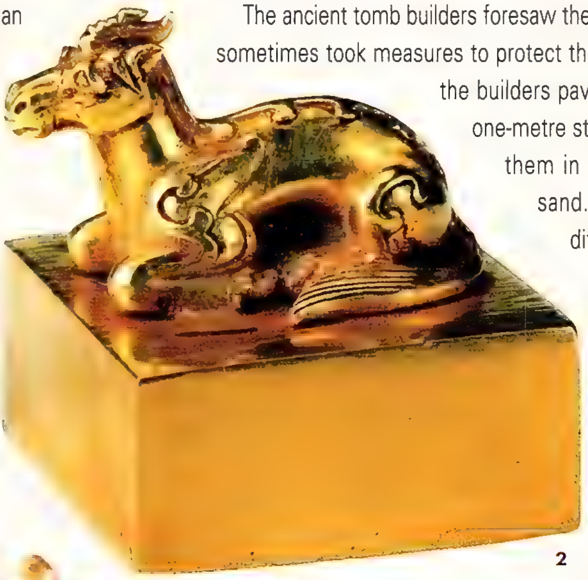
The main targets are bronze wares and jades of the periods of the Shang (c. 16th - 11th centuries BC), Zhou, Spring and Autumn (770 - 476 BC), Warring States (475 - 221), the Han and Tang. Bronze wares, ceramics and pottery figures of Qin and Han Dynasties are also popular, along with tri-coloured potteries or objects with famille rose decoration and murals of the Tang Dynasty as well as gold and silver vessels, bronze and stone figures of Buddha of the Sui (581 - 618) and Tang Dynasties. Prices are determined by the artistic value and the quality of the objects. Grave robbers concentrate on the tombs of the dynasties of Zhou, Qin, Han and Tang, but disdain those after the period of the Song Dynasty (960 - 1279).

The central government and local authorities at all levels have been striking vigorous blows at the offenders and the outcome is remarkable. However, since it is difficulty to protect and administer ancient tombs in remote and rural areas that have no transport facilities, the crime in these areas is becoming increasingly rampant.

A Community of Thieves

In some places, village heads take the lead. The head of one village in Huayin County, Shaanxi, sent villagers specially to Xi'an, Shanxi and Henan Provinces to contact purchasers while he assumed personal command of excavations. From 1996 to 1998, they dug up more than 40 ancient tombs, including one of the Western Zhou, 18 of the Eastern Zhou, three of the Warring States Period and more than 10 belonging to the Han. The northern highland at Xianyang, Shaanxi, is thick with tomb groups belonging to the Warring States Period and the Han Dynasty. At one time, almost every village carried out ancient tomb excavations. Every morning newly dug holes appeared in the villages.

In 2000, the discovery of Han Dynasty tombs in Jingbian County, northern Shaanxi, became a magnet for group upon group of excavators. They worked openly and without conscience until a police officer fired a warning shot. Only then did they leave grudgingly.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Stealing from the Dead

One grave robber confessed the methods and techniques of his illicit profession, "Finding ancient tombs beneath crop fields, loess cliff sides, river shores or cols and knowing where to start the excavation are not easy. It takes a lot of learning. First, it depends on the geographic conditions. Ancient people advocated geomantic omens, especially high officials and aristocrats. They were particular about the selection of tomb sites. After you have chosen a possible tomb site, you have to use a Luoyang spade (a kind of round iron spade, 50 cm in diameter, for taking samples of earth deep below the surface) to get soil vertically from the site. If the soil is in its natural state, we call it raw soil. Otherwise, it is mellow soil. If the soil at a depth of one to two metres remains raw, we change to another place and test again. When we find mellow soil, it indicates that there may be tombs beneath and we test again deeper. In this way, we can find the protected layer of ancient tombs made with lime, charcoal, stones, cinnabar and wood dust. Then we test all around it and we can determine the position and depth of the tomb.

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"Generally, big tombs have a passage. If we dig out the passage, we can enter the tomb chamber along it. Small tombs have no passage. We have to dig a tunnel directly into the tomb. There are several ways to excavate tombs. The most common and practical way is to tunnel a slanting hole, 45 degrees from the surface to the tomb. You can crawl in and out with help. However, the tunnel is rather long due to the steep slope and takes time to complete. The second way is to make a vertical hole down to the edge of the tomb and get in from the side. In recent years, this has become unnecessary. We dig a small hole with Luoyang spades straight down to the bottom of the tomb and dynamite it to make the hole wide enough for a person to enter. It is very fast this way."

The ancient tomb builders foresaw the possibility of theft and sometimes took measures to protect the tombs. For example, the builders paved the chambers with one-metre stone slabs and encased them in cobblestones or river sand. Digging is extremely difficult in shifting sand. If groundwater seeps into the tomb, the silt will completely block any entrance. Of course, the robbers have ways to deal with difficult tombs. The case in the eastern suburbs of Xi'an in January 2003 is a typical example. The robbers got into a tomb at the imperial mausoleum of the Han Dynasty using steel tubes 0.5 m in length and 0.7 m in diameter to control the shifting sand.

Constant Vigilance

In recent years, the most significant case of tomb robbery in Shaanxi was the one at Xianyang. An ancient tomb of the Western Zhou Dynasty on the northern shore of the Weihe River is the joint burial place of Emperor Yu Wenyong and his empress. As it has no grave mound on the surface, workers of the cultural relics and archaeological department of Shaanxi tried several times to find it, but failed. In June 1998, a group of robbers found the tomb in an eroded crop field. They stole scores of jade items and artifacts of gold and silver, which they sold to a trafficker for two million yuan. The police finally recovered from abroad the stolen relics, including the solid gold "Seal of Empress Dowager of Tianyuan", 43 mm in diameter and nearly one kilogram in weight.

1. **Many tombs of Western Zhou between Fufeng and Qishan have been repeatedly robbed.**
2. **Gold seal of Empress Tianyuan (Western Zhou) that was intercepted by Xianyang police in 1996.**
3. **The face of the gold seal of Empress Tianyuan**

1

On October 16, 2002, another group of robbers dug downward along the hole at high speed. Before long, they found the tomb chambers. When they sawed through the thick blocks of wood around the chambers, the smell coming out made them dizzy. They extracted the foul air with a vent for one hour and put on gas masks before entering the chambers. They stole four pottery figurines blackened by burning for which they clinched a deal at 300 yuan apiece on a "trial sale". Later, they snatched over 200 pieces on three occasions and disposed of the booty very quickly. They each had 4,600 yuan. Two months later, grave robbers Huang Shimin and Zhang Xiaoyan stole 71 nude female figurines. They sold them hastily at 700 yuan apiece.

When the police noticed the suspicious-looking hole the robbers had made, they put the site under surveillance.

Consequently, they arrested the culprits and recovered 34 figurines.

According to historical records, the region around Jiangcun Village at Baqiao was the area for subordinate tombs of Western Han imperial families. There are the tombs of Empress Dowager Bo, mother of Han Emperor Wendi, tombs of Empress Dou, those of her daughter Princess Guan Tao and her granddaughter Chen Ahjiao as well as the attendant tombs of Liu Xuan or Western Han Emperor Gengshi. Archaeologists who have studied the intercepted nude figurines believe they had clothes when they were buried, but the clothes decayed over time. The shape of the figurines is similar to the delicately shaped artifacts unearthed from the Changling Mausoleum of Liu Bang or Emperor Gaodi and the Yangling Mausoleum of Emperor Jingdi. The genitals of both the male and female are lifelike. It is generally acknowledged that this is one of the most serious cases in

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Xi’an in recent years in terms of both its scale and the quality of the tomb artifacts.

It is impossible to figure out how many ancient tombs have been robbed and how many stolen relics are sold every day on the loess land — the site of the imperial capital on the central Shaanxi plain.

Translated by Anju K.

1. **Nude male figurines (Western Han) unearthed from Xianyang in 1995.**
2. **The tomb of Empress Bo, Emperor Wendi's mother, at Bailuyuan, Xi'an, has been broken into several times.**
3. **The Mausoleum of Emperor Zhuang Xiang, Qin Shi Huang's father, has been robbed many times.**
4. **Tri-coloured figurines of the Tang Dynasty at an antiques market in Xi'an.**

Black Market Dealings in Xi’an

The Antiques Exchange Market, built close to the city wall of Xiaodong Gate, east of Xi'an City, in the early 1990s, was moved to Baxian'an (Eight Immortals Nunnery) outside Xiaodong Gate in 1966. Xi'an Antiques City was set up around the same time, occupying half of Zhongbei Flea Market at the crossing of Zhuque Road in the south of the city. In 2001, Shaanxi Exchange Centre for Collection was established in Dani'er Section inside Xiaodong Gate. Xi'an now has three antiques exchange markets, Xi’an Antiques City being the largest.

These markets in Xi’an differ from their counterparts in Beijing, Shanghai and Tianjin. “Antiques” means things outside the range of "cultural relics" limited by China's Law of Cultural Relics. Goods available in the antiques markets in Beijing and other cities are jades, scrolls of calligraphy and paintings, porcelain vases, incense burners, mahogany furniture, secondhand timepieces and cameras. However, these are not prominent in Xi’an’s markets. They display some ordinary goods on the stands for the sake of appearances, but actually they deal in objects of all grades with the predominant category of “cultural relics”. For example, a Han Dynasty pottery barn or an ordinary tile-end costs only less than 100 yuan each. For seriously damaged pottery figurines of the Han and Tang Dynasties and those with the coloured drawings peeled off, the bargain price could only be less than 10 yuan each. Bronzes without inscriptions or patterns from the periods of the Warring States, Qin and Han such as ding cauldrons, fang (rectangular wine containers), hu jars and swords can sell for a few thousand yuan apiece. The price of bronzes belonging to the periods of Shang and Zhou and choice items from the Spring and Autumn Period, the Warring States Period, and Han and Tang Dynasties could be up to hundreds of thousands of yuan apiece. Judging by the quotations in the markets in recent years, the prices of cultural relics are rising. To evade checking, no objects beyond the bounds of the law are displayed on the counters.

Xi'an has about 120 antique shops at three antique exchange markets. All are licensed to sell antiques, However, the bigger dealers must have their networks linking relic mongers in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangdong and even Hong Kong and Taiwan as well as those doing legwork for goods or acting as purchasing agents in rural areas. The bosses of the antique shops never take a hand in tomb excavation. The items generally pass from grave robbers to purchasing agents to bosses in Xi’an to big dealers outside Xi'an. In the late 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s, there was only one channel for the sale of cultural relics: export. Antique dealers in Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan keep a close watch on the mainland's relics markets. They smuggle out large quantities of cultural relics every year and customs in all parts of the country intercept many of them. However, the seizures by customs are just a drop in the ocean. Since the late 1990s, China's economy has been developing rapidly, encouraging a domestic market for historical relics. The purchasers fall into three categories: gift givers, relics collectors, and those who buy artifacts as investments. Giving cultural relics as gifts has become fashionable. A gift of this kind can easily cost up to 10,000 yuan.

1

Pools of Joy

Photos & Article by Dianna

Life in the city can frazzle the nerves and tire the mind. When it comes to holiday planning, sometimes it's best not to trudge around strange landscapes taking endless photos of new sights, but to put your feet up and indulge your senses. Idyllic thermal pools resorts have become increasingly popular in recent years as the panacea to urban burnout.

Most people think of Hokkaido, Taipei or Zhuhai, to name a few places, as the destinations for a seductive soak, but they're hardly unexplored territory. I discovered two major hot springs spots in Yunnan that are a pleasant surprise.

Anning Pools

Even in the information age, many people don't know about Anning thermal pools just outside Kunming. The fact that I do can be attributed to the travel book that was written over 300 years ago, which told me that south Yunnan has the most number of thermal pools.

A Woodland Hideaway

Wenquanzhen (Hot Springs) Town of Anning city, just 32 km southwest of Kunming, nestles in the mountains and is only an hour's travel by bus.

Hotels of all shapes and sizes compete for the visitor's attention and cash. In early spring,

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TIPS

FLIGHT — Daily flights from most major cities in China to Kunming.

TRANSPORT TO ANNING — Buses run from Kunming to Anning at the Xiaoximen station. Get off at Wenquanzhen Town. Fare: 5 yuan*; journey time: 55 minutes.

ACCOMMODATION — There is a wide range of hotels to choose from:

- Anning Wenquan Hotel: eight minutes walk from the station. The No.1 building has the lowest tariff, followed by the No.4 Courtyard, No.1 Villa and No.3 Villa. The lowest tariff is 90 yuan

*US $1 ~ 8 yuan

the off-peak season, the surroundings evoke a sense of tranquility and seclusion. Anning hot springs have drawn artists and poets since two thousand years ago. The cliffs and rock walls along the way are inscribed with effusive words of praise about the hot springs, while the Caoxi Temple made famous during the Tang Dynasty (618-907) can be found in the mountains.

My interest was piqued by news from the locals that a new forest hot springs resort had just been opened, I made my way up the hill across from the station. Pretty soon I heard the sound of flowing water and people laughing, while delightfully refreshing woody smells of the forest came my way, and a kimono-clad woman sweeping leaves appeared. It turned out that this was a Japanese-style hot springs resort. I was impressed by the inspired choice of location and stylish concept.

Rainbow Pools

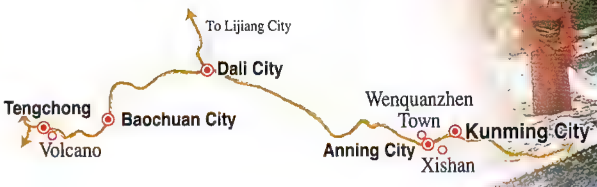
The Jinfang Japanese-style forest resort is set on four hectares of land. It is the only one of its kind in Yunnan province, with almost 20 stone-laid outdoor thermal pools dotted around the cypress and pine sheltered grounds. The pool was strewn with fresh and sweet-smelling flowers. The geothermal springs here are full of minerals good for the human body, including sodium, potassium, magnesium and calcium carbonate.

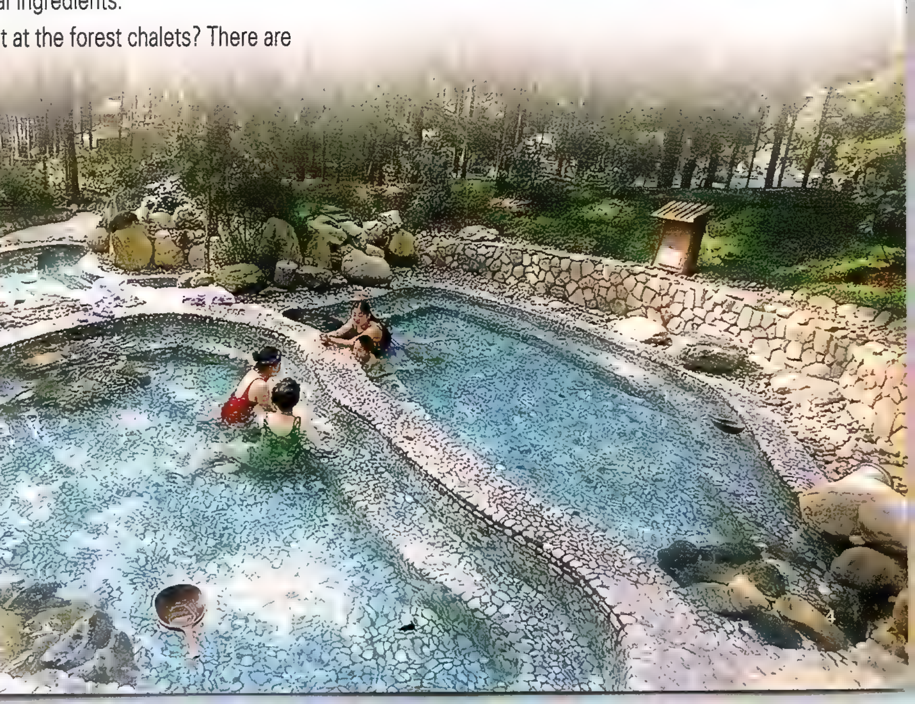
I chose a relatively secluded double pool for myself, letting my weary body and soul be intoxicated by the surroundings — a light breeze wafted the scent of flowers and the sound of birdsong.

The well-soaked and pampered guest can opt for a wide array of therapeutic spa treatments at the main building: aromatherapy massage, Chinese Tuina (naprapathy), Korean Tuina, foot massage, back massage, scalp massage and back rubs — just what the stressed urbanite needs.

The restaurant has an extensive and healthy menu to choose from, including fine teas and country-style cuisine which is made from only the freshest local ingredients.

To make it a really unforgettable visit, why not stay the night at the forest chalets? There are only 13, which come with their own gardens and private thermal pools, ideal for spending quality time with loved ones.





1. **The scented rose pool is resplendent with colours.**
2. **The ladies in kimonos serve tired guests at the forest hot springs.**
3. **Private thermal pools are available in the chalets.**
4. **The 20 pools cater to all tastes and moods.**

per day, while villas cost 5,800 yuan per day.

- Jinfang Japanese-style forest hot springs at Longxi Lu, Anning, are a 10-minute walk up the hill from the station. Forest cabins are 680 to 880 yuan per day (double/triple occupancy). Thermal pool treatment prices: forest thermal pools, 88 yuan all day, open from 9 am to 11 pm; scalp massage and back-rub, 25 yuan; foot massage, 50 yuan/55 minutes; Chinese Tuina massage, 68 yuan/hour; full-body aromatherapy massage, 148 yuan/2 hours
- Kunming Cadres Recreation Centre (directly opposite the station): a standard room costs 198 yuan, but 120 yuan off peak. It has natural geothermal mineral water baths and other therapeutic facilities.

THE COST OF SOAKING — hot springs admissions: "The Best Baths on Earth" charge up to 10 yuan per visit, but thermal pools belonging to the hotel resorts are much more expensive. Villa No.1 at Anning charges 500 yuan per private room at their Guangmei pools. The Jinfang Japanese-style forest hot springs cost 88 yuan for adults, 25 yuan for children. Worth noting: Anning Wenquanzhen Town is 1,795 m above sea-level, an altitude that can raise your heartbeat, so it is advisable to soak in the thermal pools for only short periods.

FOOD — Restaurants are found at all the hotels, and Yunnan cuisine or country-style home cooking is offered.

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Lap of Luxury

For those who like a more traditional style, there is the grand old man of hot springs resorts, the Anning Wenquan (Hot Springs) Hotel.

The 60-year-old hotel wears its history and prestige with pride. A calligraphy banner touting the "Best Baths on Earth" by the Ming Dynasty (1368—1644) scholar Yang Shengyang is hung in the hotel grounds. The hotel has the best location in the thermal pools zone, so the entire complex uses crystal clear underground mineral water at a warm 42°C. The hotel has also hosted a who's who of China's dignitaries as well as other luminaries, such as Zhou Enlai, Deng Xiaoping, the 10th Panchen Lama and Cambodian King Norodom Sihanouk, etc.

The hotel was designed to cater for visitors of different needs. Some of its buildings provide budget to mid-range accommodation, while villas provide secluded quarters for VIP guests. Entrance to these villas was once so exclusive that even money couldn't buy one's way in.

I was in luck. The hotel is planning to open these luxurious quarters to the public, and I was among the first "commoners" allowed in such hallowed grounds. Led by a security guard, I crossed the heavily guarded garden gates and a new world appeared; the huge garden had private tennis courts, a gym and a dining room. It felt like I was entering some tycoon's mansion. The villa I would stay at was called the Fengyuan (Phoenix Pavilion) Villa Building.

The Best Bath Under Heaven

Being more accustomed to youth hostels and sleeping in shared accommodation, I took a little time to adjust to the luxury suite's impressive size and layout: conference room, theatre, study, mahjong room, laundry, storage room, four

3

TIPS

TRANSPORT TO XISHAN — Take the No. 6 bus at the Liulu Station in Kunming directly to the Xishan forest park entrance; fare: 1 yuan; journey duration: 25 minutes. Longmen cable tram, 15/one way, 30/return.

XISHAN SCENIC AREA ADMISSIONS — Dragon Gate, 20 yuan; Huating Zen Temple, 4 yuan; Taihua Temple, 3 yuan; Jade Orchid Garden, 3 yuan.

KUNMING ACCOMMODATION —Kunming Camellia Hotel, at Dongfeng Donglu, near the Kunming Hotel: beds cost 30 yuan including shared bathroom, single rooms cost 90 yuan with bathroom. The Chama Bar in the Hotel's gardens is definitely worth a visit.

FOOD —Around the hotel eateries abound, offering Chinese and Western cuisine and Yunnan delicacies.

separate bathrooms, three bedrooms with en-suites, finally my master bedroom with en-suite and private garden.

Just pottering around this enormous pad was enough to while away a few hours, not to mention soaking up the sublime sights and smells of the garden. After lounging for some time, all of the trivialities and worries of the real world disappeared, and the only question that remained was, "What culinary delights await me tonight?" The hotel restaurant serves authentic Yunnan fare: deep-friend bee pupa, wild mushrooms, organic vegetables and hot springs tofu (bean curd) banquet. Made and cooked using the mineral water from the local hot springs, the tofu acquires a particular fragrance and succulence, not to be missed.

To wash away the day's fatigue, there is no need to head for the tourist-packed "Best Baths on Earth" for a soak. Each suite at the villas is equipped with its own spacious thermal pool. One turn of the tap and out streams the fantastic spring water. The soft mineral water is colourless and odorless, with no particles or sediments. It improves circulation, digestion, treats all types of arthritis, sciatica, skin conditions and a host of other illnesses. The old adage goes: "With the weight of the world on my shoulders, I seek refuge and delight in the best bath under Heaven." It doesn't get much better than this.

1. The No.1 villa at the prestigious Anning Hot Springs Hotel
2. Private thermal pools in the mansions
3. The "Best Baths on Earth" are popular with visitors to the Anning Hot Springs.
4&5. The tofu banquet features tofu made from hot springs water.
6. Camellia — the provincial flower of Yunnan
7. The Dragon Gate is the ultimate destination for visitors to Xishan.
8. "Fathomless depths beneath treacherous cliffs" at Longmen

6

XISHAN FOREST BATHS

After trying out the thermal pools in Anning, don't miss an equally therapeutic visit to Kunming Xishan's forest baths.

Xishan forest park, at the west bank of Dianchi Lake in Kunming's southwest is a huge reserve covering Biji Mountain, Huating Mountain and Taihua Mountain, at 2,500 m above sea level. The largest temples in Kunming are here in the serene surroundings of the densely wooded park — Huating Temple and Taihua Temple. They are the oldest in Yunnan and founded by Yuan Dynasty's first generation zen master Xuan Jian. Perched atop the mountain is what was formerly called Sanqing Ge or the "Pavilion of Three Serenities". This summer resort palace for Emperor Liang of the Yuan Dynasty was later converted into a Taoist Monastery, and, of course, there are also the renowned caves of Longmen.

7

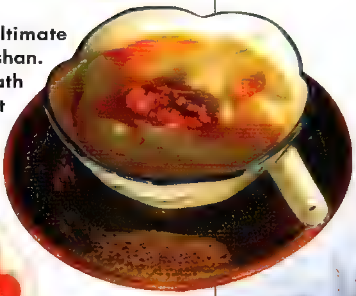
In Xishan, usually tourists head straight for the Longmen or Dragon Gate, taking the cable tram up the mountain with the hordes, but I preferred to enjoy a hike and then a well-deserved forest bath.

Kunming in early spring is a riot of blooming colours. Naturally the forest park is a veritable palace of flowers, attracting locals from all walks of life: early morning sports buffs, young people getting fit, leisurely strollers enjoying the greenery, loyal devotees paying homage to Buddha, as well as foodies who come up the mountain especially for the organically grown local produce.

From the entrance, I made my way to the Garden of Jade Orchids to enjoy the rare and exotic flora, then on to the magnificent Huating Temple. After crossing the ancient Taihua path, I entered the garden-like Taihua Temple, following Buddhist worshippers. There I saw Kunming's king of flowers, the Taihua jade orchid, and the provincial flower of Yunnan — the camellia.

Only a 20-minute walk from Taihua Temple is the cable tram to the peak. I continued on foot, and half an hour later arrived at Sanqing Ge, facing Dianchi Lake and the scenery had changed completely. It was as the poets described: "Fathomless depths beneath the mossy treacherous cliffs, while a wide expanse of emerald water shimmers." There are Numerous temples and stone halls built right on the cliffs.

Here tourists jostle for space, pressed against one another on the dangerously narrow path. At its end are the Longmen (Dragon Gate) Caves built in 1781. Even with all the pushing and shoving to the Dragon Gate, I managed to take some interesting photographs.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The Hot Seas of Tengchong

Tengchong, in southwest Yunnan, is a place that combines volcanoes and hot springs.

Springs for All Budgets

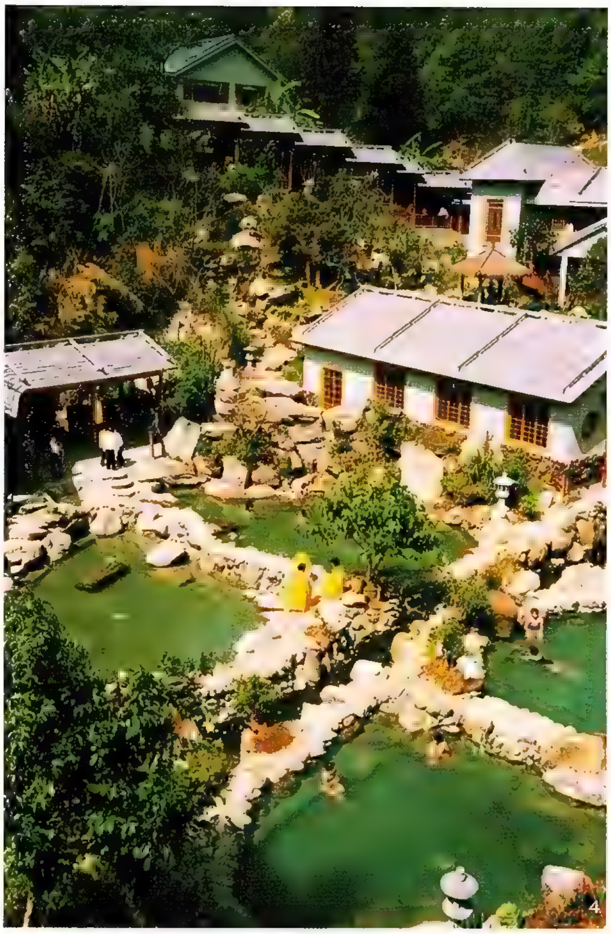
Tengchong is one of China's three major geothermal zones. The county has over 80 hot spring clusters, countless numbers of springs, and the level of thermal activity is the highest in China. The spring water here varies in minerals, hence the sulfur springs, hydrogen sulfide springs, and oxygen springs.

The flight from Kunming to Baoshan takes 45 minutes. From there it is a three-hour bus ride to Tengchong. Then it takes only 15 minutes from the township to the famous Hot Sea scenic area, where, in an area of nine square kilometres, one can see vapour jets, steam rising from the ground, boiling springs, jet springs, hot springs, of which 14 thermal pool clusters have water temperatures above 90°C. No wonder a stroll in the scenic area feels like entering someone's steamy bathroom; everyone and

TIPS

TRANSPORT TO TENGCHONG:

- By plane: from Kunming to Baoshan; one-way, 440 yuan; duration: 45 minutes. Buses depart for Tengchong from the Baoshan terminal; fare, 35 yuan; duration, around three hours and 30 minutes.
- Coaches: from Kunming Nanku station to Tengchong, 155 to 184 yuan; departs every morning and evening; duration: 12 hours.



everything is enshrouded in a veil of warm mist.

There is much to see and do in the scenic area. I hastened to the Hot Sea Bathing Centre, intending to see the sights only after some relaxation in the hot springs. After paying the 100 yuan admission, I was led into the large Japanese-style gardens, where outdoor pools appeared in the graceful surroundings. With few people, it felt slightly lonely. I discovered quite a few specialty medicinal baths: Fragrant Bath, Shennong Medicine Valley, Aloe Vera Nectar, Taibai Qiongjiang Wine Baths, Fragrant Cypress Aromatherapy.

After luxuriating in a few of the small pools, I lay on the warm ground and only got up to leave after a good sweat. If it were not for the constraints of time, sipping tea in the gardens behind the thermal pools would have been a dreamy way to spend an afternoon.

The scenic area has other baths at different prices and in different forms. The Big Scalding Wok offers indoor hot springs at 30 yuan, and then there are budget baths for 5 yuan.

Yunnan's "18 Oddities"

There are some truly breathtaking sights within the Hot Sea scenic area, of which the Big Scalding Wok is a highlight. Three jets beneath the Wok, which has a diameter of six metres, spurt out boiling water at 96.6 to 102°C. It is a full sound, light and movement show that can scare the faint-hearted. Smart vendors use the spring water to cook eggs, which they tie up in grass ropes for sale. The eggs, cooked in 20 minutes, are one of Yunnan's "18 Oddities".

Another oddity struck me as I turned around. Before me a row of half-naked tourists sat with bamboo tubes stuck to their backs, from the torso to the calves, looking like the alien invaders from a Hollywood science

1. **The Big Scalding Wok is the most impressive sight of the Hot Sea scenic area. (Photo provided by the Tengchong Tourism Bureau)**
2. **One of Yunnan's "18 Oddities" — grass-wrapped eggs**
3. **The Beauties Pool has rare therapeutic spring water.**
4. **Hot Sea Bath Centre's Japanese garden thermal pools (photo provided by the Tengchong Tourism Bureau)**
5. **Boiling water and steam spray out through the tiny stone holes.**

5

LOCAL TRANSPORT :

- To the volcano park: small buses leave for Mazhan from the northwest station in Tengchong County, or a 10-minute walk from the terminal: bus fare is around 5 yuan: duration: around one hour. Then take a shuttle bus to the park entrance, 2 yuan; duration: five minutes
- To the Geothermal Park: walk from the hotel to the large roundabout, and catch the bus to the Geothermal Park for 5 yuan; duration: 15 minutes

ADMISSIONS — Volcano Park, 2 yuan; Geothermal Scenic Area, 30 yuan, includes natural geothermal pools; the public bathhouses cost 5 yuan per visit; Hot Sea Pool Valley's open-air thermal pools charge 100 yuan for admission, while a geothermal foot bath with cup therapy costs 50 yuan.

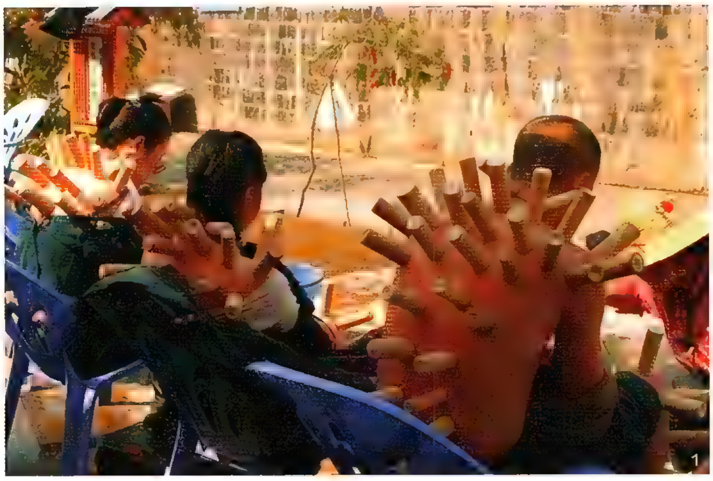
ACCOMMODATION — Tengchong has a good assortment of hotels for all budgets, from 10 yuan beds to suites costing hundreds of yuan. I stayed at the Tonglida Hotel opposite the station where a standard room cost 168 yuan, or 50 yuan off peak; at the Mingzhu (Pearl) Grand Hotel within the geothermal scenic area, a standard room is 280 yuan, with a 20% discount off peak rate.

FOOD — Eateries abound in the town, snack stalls can be found at the scenic area.

fiction movie. The "aliens" seemed unfazed and were quite pleased with the treatment though. Local women were busy collecting the highly therapeutic spring water from the Big Scalding Wok to soak the bamboo tubes. It is believed that the water is good for treating arthritis, skin diseases, and digestive system ailments. The cost of this treatment is 15 yuan.

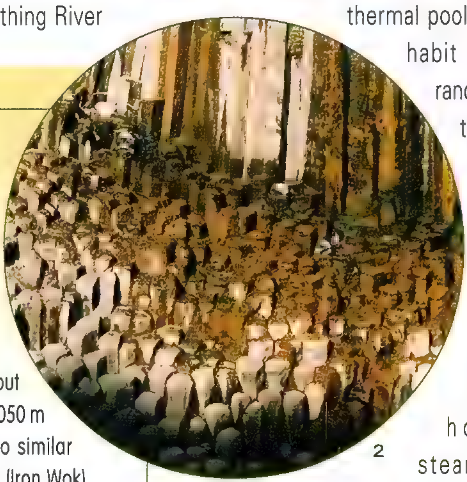
A walk along the pathway led to further surprises: the Fertility Well that reputedly increases women's chance to become pregnant. Scientific analysis has determined that the well contains spring water that is full of oxygen ions, carbon ions, sulfate ions, and other ingredients that boost metabolism and regulate internal secretions.

The Drum Beat Spring will greet your ears before you see it, for it is formed by boiling water and steam blocked by a large rock, hence the thunderous drumming sound. The aptly named Pearl Springs, which consist of hundreds of tiny jets may be small, but they are a real treat. Eyeglass Spring is a humorous creation of Nature — made of two springs that take the shape of a pair of glasses. The all-natural Beauties Pool contains the best water from all the springs, and the warm rocks are great for a post-soak rest.



Finally I came to the Bathing River scenic area. On the way I saw strange and wonderful rocks formed by the minerals in spring water over millions of years. Once past the valley it was again a scene of rising steam, reminding me that this was an area with thermal activity. I was told that the thermal pools here have a habit of "moving" randomly. They're temperamental, given to sudden eruptions, putting on free geyser shows for visitors; the hot water, steam, mud and sand are spurted skywards in a huge explosion. Although I could recognise the warning signs of these events — strange sounds and muddy waters gush forth — it was with some trepidation that I carefully walked out of the scenic area.

Translated by Cheng Lei



ON THE VOLCANO'S EDGE

Not far west from Tengchong, there is a volcano shaped like Mt. Fuji of Japan, named Mt. Daying, or Ma'anshan (Mt. Horse-saddle). Being the tallest and youngest volcano in Tengchong, it is 2,614 m high, while the crater has a diameter of 300 m and is over 50 m deep. Within a 50-km radius of Mt. Daying, there are hundreds of thermal pools and hot springs .

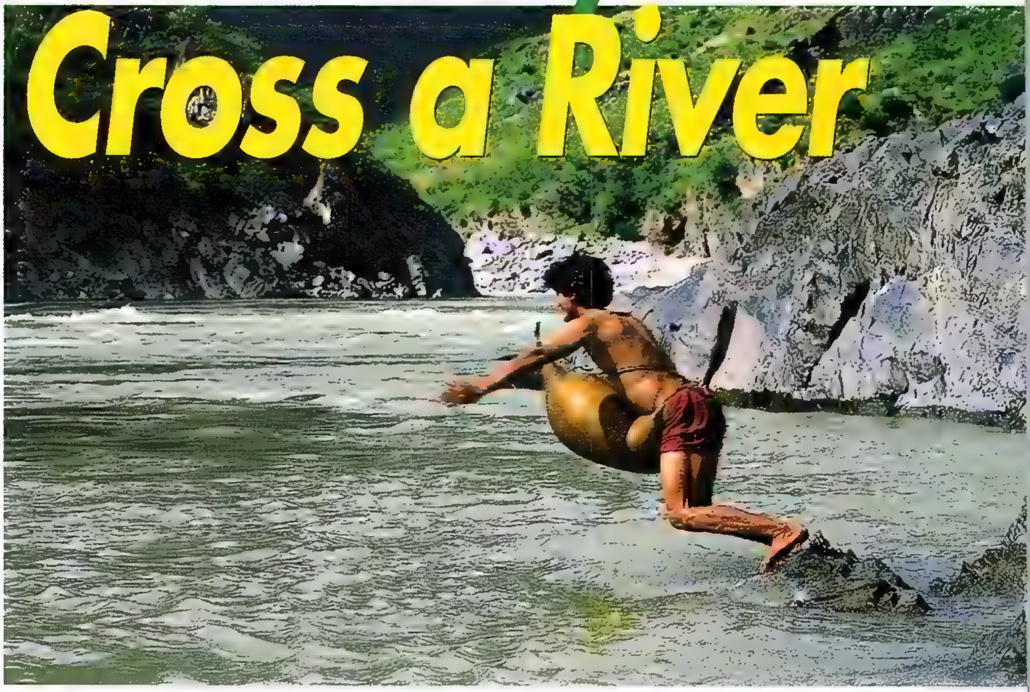
The first stop in the Volcano Park was the exhibition hall where I learnt more about volcanoes. Then I climbed all 598 stone steps in the scorching sun, to the summit of the 2,050 m high Mt. Dakong (Mountain of Big Hollow), which is surrounded by a dozen or so similar mountains: Mt. Xiaokong (Small Hollow), Mt. Heikong (Black Hollow), and Mt. Tieguo (Iron Wok). These are all typical examples of Tengchong volcanoes, and a well-preserved part of China's volcanic history. Beneath was the crater of the Mt. Dakong volcano, its diameter spanning more than 400 m. I walked around the rim, which was green with trees and shrubs, and shuddered as I imagined the raging inferno here thousands of years ago.

The fascinating topography formed by volcanic activity is worth seeing: lava terracing, volcanic cones, stone columns, barrier lakes, as well as volcano lakes to name a few. At the Heiyuhe (Black Fish River) valley, near the Volcano Park, these spectacular creations were formed by the crystallisation of lava and subsequent shaping over time.

1. **The unique bamboo tube therapy at the scenic area**
2. **Stone columns in the volcanic area (photo provided by the Tengchong Tourism Bureau)**
3. **Tengchong is full of volcanoes. (Photo provided by the Tengchong Tourism Bureau)**

An Alternative Way to Cross a River

Article & Photos by Huang Yanhong



The roaring Yellow River has formed a natural barrier at the border of Qinghai Province, Gansu Province and Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region for centuries.

With no bridges to cross, the people there came up with the most creative transportation. They make huge bags from sheep or cattle hides, commonly known as "huntuo", which can be inflated and use as rafts. The hides need to be completely air-dried, then leave an opening to pump air before sealing.

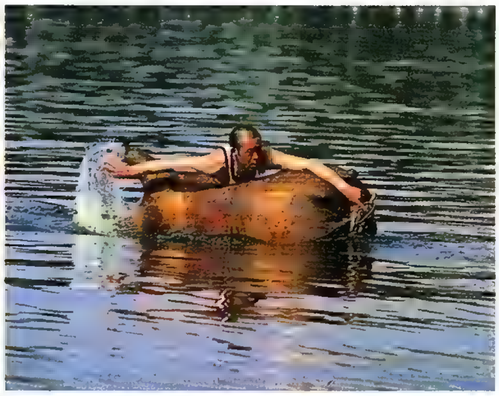
Since these inflated hide bags can be used to float across the river, they become the wonderful companion for the non-swimmers. On top of that, these floating devices actually opened up a new market and bred a special group of "commercial rafters".

The rafter can safely transport his passengers across the river without getting them wet. How? First, the passenger has to get into the hide bag, then the rafter would fill the hide bag with air. When inflation is completed, the hide bag is pulled into the river and the rafter would lie on top of the bag and begin to paddle with his hands.

Since it takes about six minutes to reach to the opposite bank and the bag has just 15 minutes of air supply for an average person, timing is crucial. When passengers take a trip, they are putting their lives in the hands of the rafters. Fortunately, there has been no fatal accident in recent years.

If more people or livestock have to be transported, rafters would put a wooden frame on top of dozens of inflated hide bags. The largest kind of raft is made from over a hundred hide bags with a load capactiy of 20 to 30 tns.

In the past, goods such as timber and wool were transported by rafts in the mountainous areas between Gasu and Qinghai Provinces because there was no other means of transport. Sometimes the distance of the voyage could be as long as several hundred kilometres. Most of the rafters were from the Hui, Sala and Bao'an ethnic groups who lived in the areas along the Yellow River. They battled with dangerous currents and had to live outdoor for weeks. Nonetheless, owing to the use of modern boats, this ancient transport device can only be seen in remotes areas nowadays.

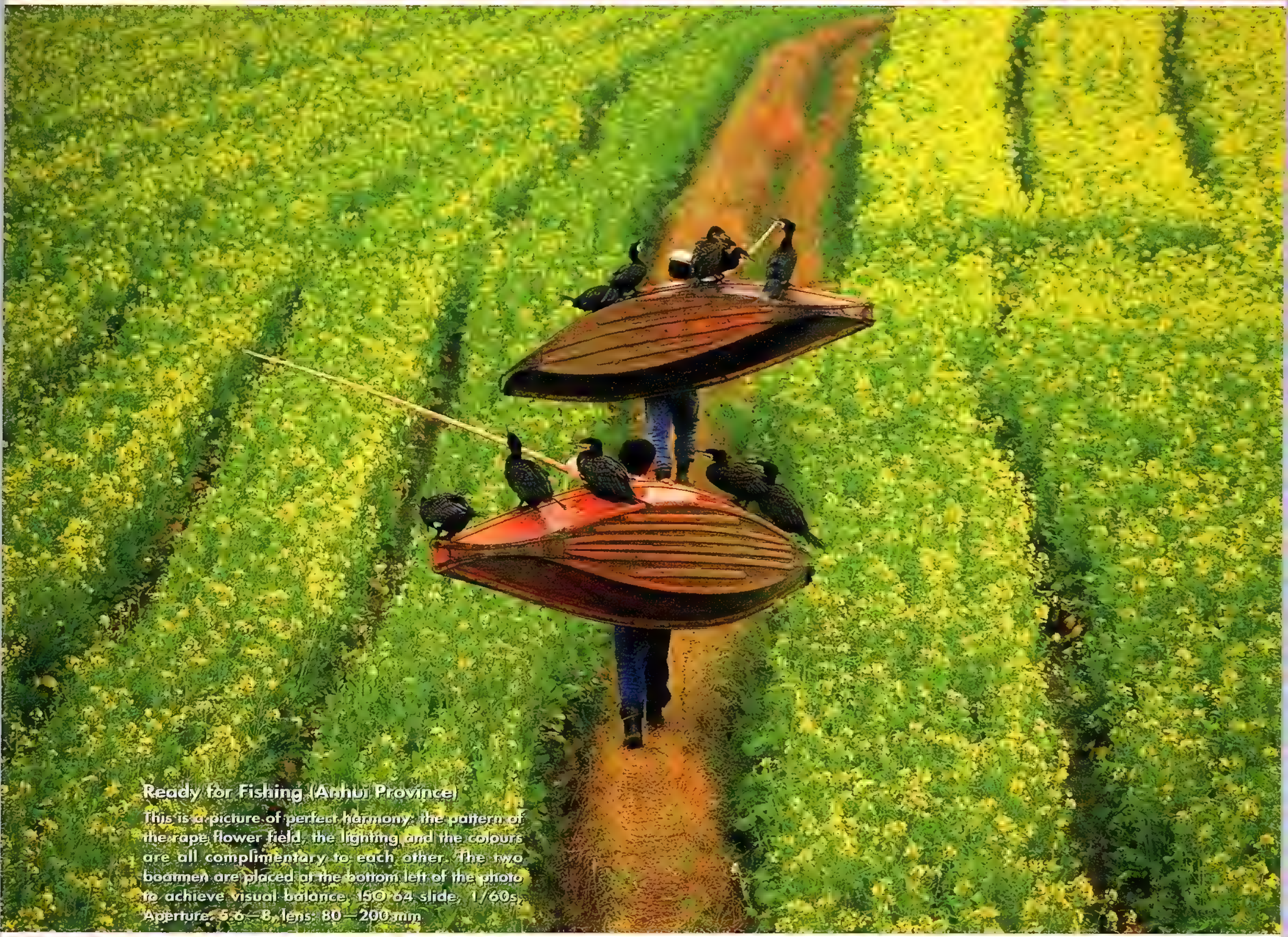


1. **Hide bags are still used by people from the Naxi ethnic group living on the upper reaches of the Yangtze River. (By Xie Guanghui)**
2. **As soon as the passengers get into the hide bags, they put their lives in the hands of the rafters. (By Li Zemin)**
3. **The rafter paddles desperately to reach to the opposite bank. (By Chan Yat Nin)**

How to Take Picture-Postcard Shots ?

— Tips on Landscape Photography (I)

Photos & Article by Chan Yat Nin



Ready for Fishing (Anhui Province)

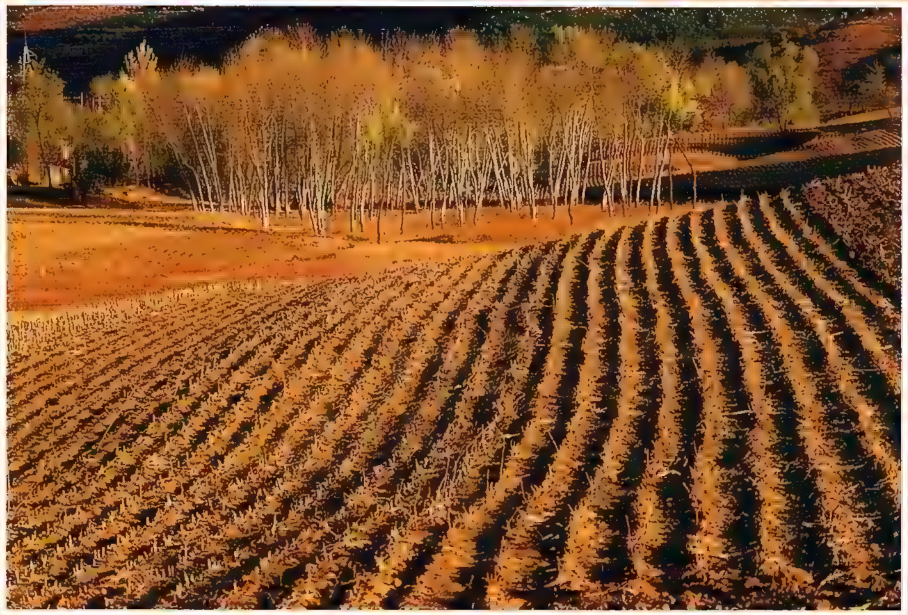
This is a picture of perfect harmony: the pattern of the rape flower field, the lighting and the colours are all complimentary to each other. The two boatmen are placed at the bottom left of the photo to achieve visual balance. ISO 64 slide, 1/60s, Aperture: 5.6—8, lens: 80—200 mm

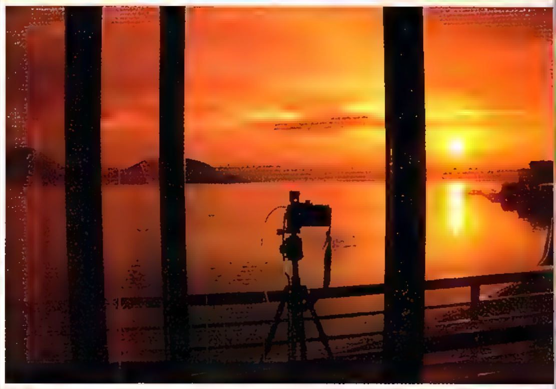
How many times have we been enchanted by spectacular scenes on a once-in-a-lifetime trip? We snap away in a hurry, believing the views will be secured forever in our photograph albums.

Only after getting the film developed and receiving the prints, do we find the pictures lacking. The sublime scenery has become just so-so in our photographs, and fail to live up to our actual experience. Landscape photography is trickier than we think.

▼ **The Autumn of Western Liaoning (Liaoning Province)**

Together with the outline of the field, low shooting angle and manipulation of lighting, the photo seems to appear three-dimensional. The trees on the upper left of the picture are balanced with the rising ridge of the field on the upper right. ISO 100 slide, 1/60s, Aperture: 8—11, lens: 80—200 mm



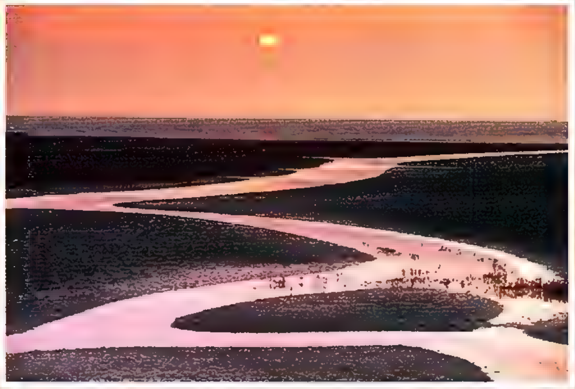


▲ **The Sunrise of Dongyehu Lake (Hokkaido, Japan)**

This is both a landscape photograph and a travel journey of the photographer. The window frames neatly divide the lights into different segments and dress up the photo. ISO 50 slide, 1/15s, Aperture: 8, lens: 24—85 mm

▶ **The Sunset of the Panjing Wetland (Liaoning Province)**

The S-shaped river is elegantly taken up two-third of the photo. ISO 100 slide, 1/60s, Aperture: 8, lens: 70—200 mm



Fundamental Skill

The fundamental skill of photography is the ability to compose a picture.

1. Classical Composition — harnessing a sense of harmony

To present the ultimate charm of natural scenery is the gist of composition in landscape photography. With a grand vista before us, we can use the lens of the camera to dissect different pictures. The weight of objects in the picture should be balanced; but avoid perfect balance and putting the subject item in the very centre. Such a composition makes the picture dull and lifeless.

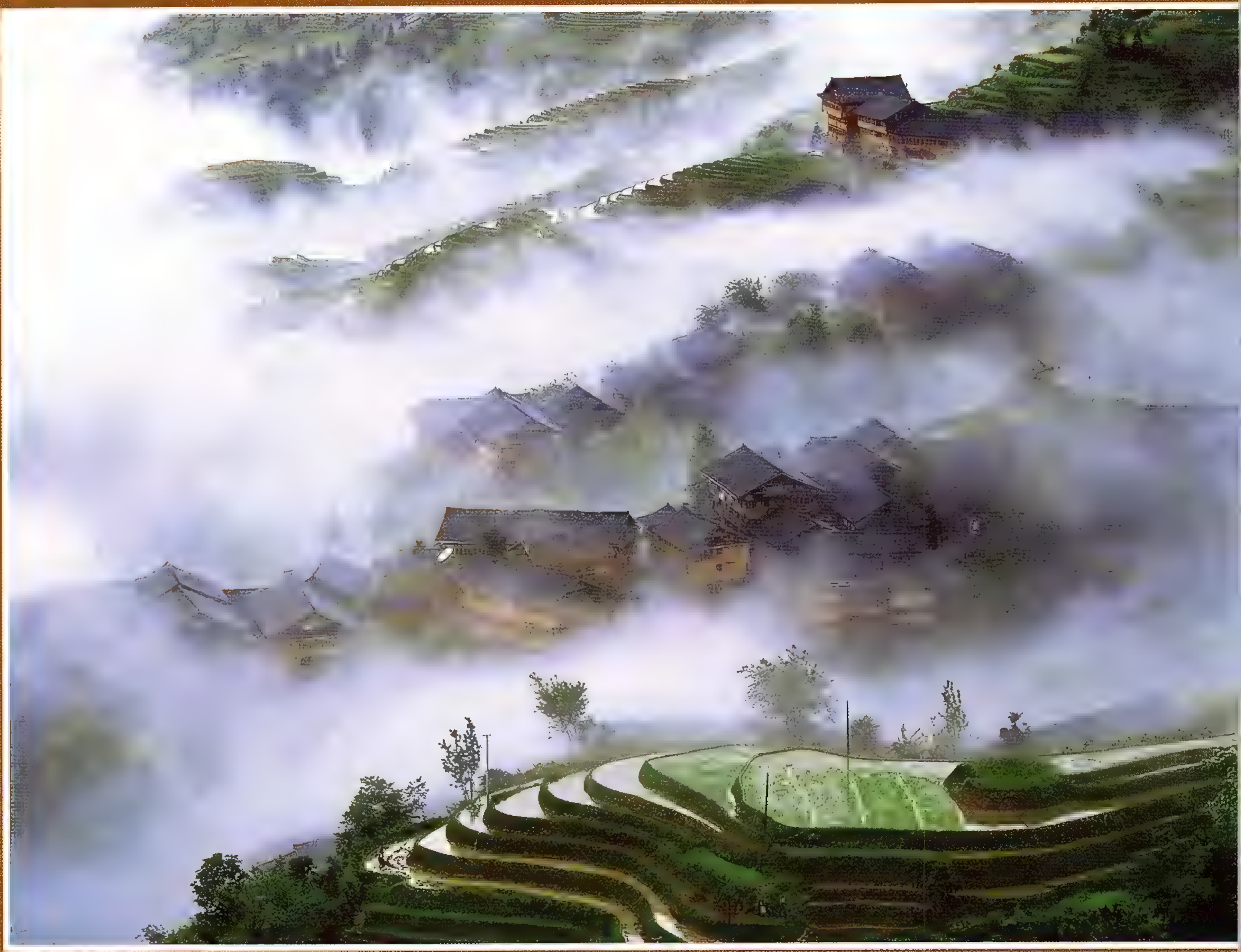
- So, how to make the picture balanced and striking? Use the "golden ratio" for composition: the ratio of 1:0.62. This golden ratio has been tested over time as the most stable and stunting standard ratio and is greatly used in art. When you are shooting pictures of landscapes, put the horizons, a dominant tall tree, a ram roaming on the grass field, or the chief summit on this golden ratio. As such, the picture will be more appealing.
- Use winding and melodic lines to compose the pictures. For instance, an S-shaped composition gives a sense of movement; diagonal composition depth; triangular composition stability.
- The focus of eyesight (usually in the centre of picture or where the winding lines lead to), if placed in line with the centre of interest, will capture the viewer right away. If the focus and centre of interest diverge, it will mess up the picture.
- When framing a picture, give a lot of space to the direction in which the subject item is leaning. For instance, the direction in which mountains are tilting, or a herd of cattle is moving should be given more room. Whereas the background of that direction should be given less space. Otherwise, the picture will be tense and stifled.
- Be selective, and don't include everything. Remember: the art of photography is the art of eliminating and simplifying composition. Therefore, when you frame a picture, eliminate redundant scenes or objects (for instance, disorderly branches, colourless and layerless sky) in order to enrich the picture by making the subject stand out.

2. Break the Rules to Create Sensibility

- Break the balance. Create differences and break our habitual gaze to emphasise certain images, making the composition more forceful. This approach is better adopted by using a fisheye or hyper-focal lens.
- An absolutely balanced composition can sometimes be used to emphasise objects and to achieve special effects.
- Break harmonious space. For instance, you can use an upside-down

▼ **The Paddy Field (Longsheng, Guangxi Zhuang Aut. Reg.)**

The different levels of the paddy field create a dynamic and vibrant picture. The dense fog on the left of the picture makes a welcoming layer. ISO 50 slide, 1/30s, Aperture: 8, lens: 80 mm



triangle to bring forth instability; you may position the major figures or objects in front of a narrow space, and behind a vast space. This can give a sense of isolation, as if the objects are trapped in limbo.

❂ Use a wide-angle lens to stoop down or view up to produce distorted effects.

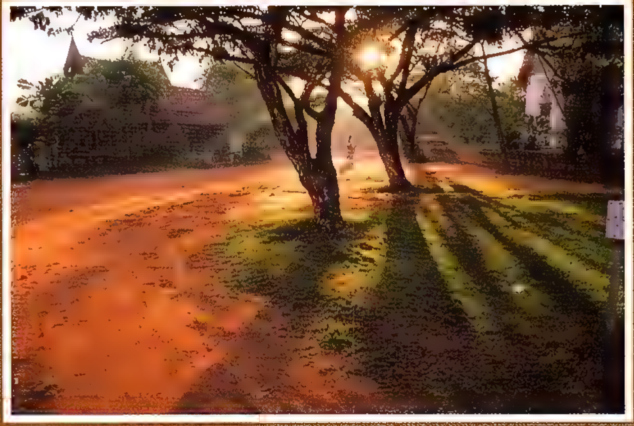
Use Light Sensibly

The art of photography, indeed, is an art of light and shadow, especially in landscape photography. The angle of incoming light, the strength of reflection, and the colour of the beams all shape the pictures. As such, we have to be very careful how to make use of the light properly.

❂ The nicest rays come in the morning and during sunset. The light at dawn is not only rich in colour, but also soft and subtle. Light coming at a low angle creates ample shadows, and hides unnecessary details, which makes nature very mysterious. Cherish the first and last beams of the sun.

❂ Both dawn and dusk bring light that colours the sky in a special way. Don't miss it.

❂ Light coming from the side, be it on the lightened or darkened side, offers a more charming and three-dimensional result, compared to having light shining directly onto the object.



▲ **The Country Field (Thailand)**

The village here is dominated by a chunky tree. The shadow of the tree creates interesting geometric line that put a different perspective on the photograph.
ISO 100 slide, 1/60s, Aperture: 8, lens: 20—25 mm

So when taking landscape photos, always try to use side light.

❂ Make good use of regional light. Due to the shadows of clouds and mountains, the sun may only reach certain regions of a vast area. This usually invokes a special atmosphere, much more mystical than overall brightness.

❂ Make good use of the tone of the light. In photography the colour blue suggests high temperatures. So the blue tone is called the warm tone. On the other hand, yellowish red flame suggests lower temperatures, and so the red tone is called cool tone. Most people like the cool tone in early morning or at sunset, as it suggests passion, richness, and mystery. In contrast, warm tone gives a serene, sharp, and cold feeling. If the colour temperature of the area is far from desirable, you can use filters on your lens to rectify it.

❂ Landscape photographers should always carry a compass. It helps to determine the most desirable direction for light exposure, and the best shooting time.

Translated by He Fei

◀ **Sunrise in Guangzhou**

Since the light of sunrise is very delicate and the contrast is huge, it is best to first balance out the lights with a filter.
ISO 50 slide, 1/15s, Aperture: 5.6, lens: 24 mm

Commonly used filters in landscape photography

Landscape photographers should pay attention to the use of filters. Here are some for your reference:

1) Brightness and Contrast Setting Filters

Usually, it is a half grey and half colourless translucent filter. One type is of gradual changes while the other is of sharp changes. Usually, the gradual one offers more natural effects. Some such filters include colour balance, allowing the photographer to change the hue of the picture with an orange or blue tinted glass.

I recommend Cokin filters and they are available in professional camera shops. The most commonly used items are:

Cokin Filter Holder: "A" series (suitable for 36mm-65mm lens) and "P" series (suitable for 48mm-82mm lens). The "P" series is more user-friendly. Each series is also divided into regular type (which holds three filters) and ultra-thin type (which holds only one filter, and is more suitable for a wide-angle lens).

Graduated Grey Filter: There are two kinds, with serial codes 120 and 121. The 120 is less dense than the 121 and can be used more often.

Graduated Orange Filter: This is also called Sunset 2, with its code 198. This filter helps strengthen the colour and atmosphere of pictures taken during sunrise and sunset.

Polariser: This is used to eliminate any beams reflected directly into the lens from objects being photographed. It is mainly used for taking pictures of the sky to create a greater contrast between blue sky and white clouds. Thus, the clouds stand out more. In addition, it can eliminate any undesirable rays reflected from metal, glass and water surfaces, especially when taking pictures of still water surfaces. Using a polariser, the water surface of the pictures will be especially clear and penetrating. There are two kinds of polariser: the linear polariser (LPL) and circular polariser (CPL). The former can only be used on a manual SRL camera; whereas the latter can be used on an automatic SRL camera.

The Cokin Polariser "P" Series is a CPL. It can swirl in the filter holder, enabling you to adjust it to the most desirable position. You can also consider other brands like HOYA. The HOYA Polariser can be attached directly to the lens instead of using a holder.

2) Colour Balance

The graduated orange filter can be included in this category. Most colour balance filters cannot balance the brightness. The most commonly used colour balance filters are:

Warm Filters (81 series): These filters come in lighter to darker types, namely 81A, 81B, and 81C. Warm filters are suitable for use two hours after daybreak and two hours before sunset—the time when the tone of the sun is rather high. You can't live without it when shooting pictures on plateaus, mountains and seashores, where ultra-violet light is strong.

Orange Glass: It yields more contrast to a dawn and dusk atmosphere. Yet, the atmosphere may sometimes be overly toned, so use it with care.

PL with colour filters: These filters are expensive new products in recent years. They not only eliminate light reflection, but also change and emphasise the natural colours.

HK — YESTERDAY & TODAY

Photos by Chan Yat Nin   Article by Maggie Lam

All black and white photos are selected from the Historical Postcard Collections of HK

CHRISTMAS SHOWTIME
CHRISTMAS SHOWTIME
G2000

Yellowish black and white pictures seem to have the magic to bring out nostalgic feelings in people. They even have the power to transform the most difficult past times into "good old days".

But the old times were harsh for Hong Kong people nonetheless. Just several decades ago, they still needed to wait four days to get fresh water from the public taps. Most people had to line up under the scorching sun for at least half a day, and then hauled their water buckets all the way uphill to their pitiful wooden shacks. Still, those were the better times. Hong Kong people had battled with horrible wars, famines and poor living conditions even before that.

Those were the days when kids were not just kids, but grown-ups who needed to take up half of adults' responsibilities. They sold newspapers, worked at the factories, and filled up whatever odd jobs that could help out their families.

Ironically, those were also the days when kids were kids, because they remained innocent and content in midst of the roughest days. Although their world was challenging, it was full of hope and joy. Most of them learnt how to read and write on the roofs of shabby residential buildings, and they did not need fancy classrooms to build up their resilient characters.

1890

1910

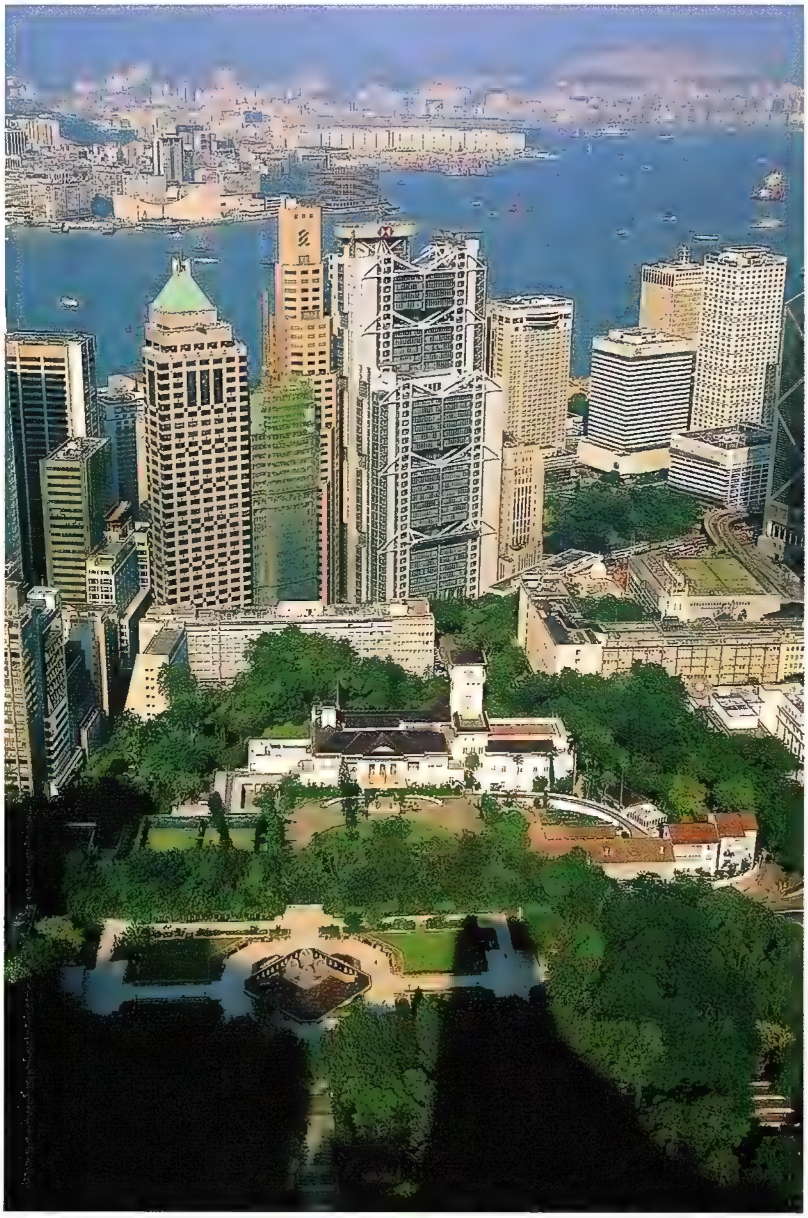
CHRISTMAS SHOWTIME
BOULEVARD

2004 — Park Lane Shoppers' Boulevard, Nathan Road, Tsim Sha Tsui, Kowloon

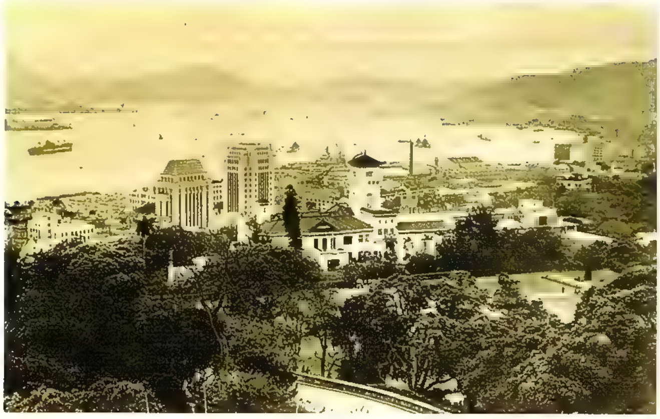
Most importantly, these children have become the building blocks of the Hong Kong today. And the truth is, the success of Hong Kong was not depended on the twenty families who soaked up majority of the assets of the city, but the ordinary citizens who believe in a better tomorrow. Indeed, their faith did much more than better their lives; they created a miracle. Together they transformed Hong Kong from a fishing village into the world's top financial centre in a mere century.

While living up to the reputation of a world-class city, Hong Kong still preserves traces of its history and unique customs. For instance, there is no other metropolis in the world where it can offer small town charm like Hong Kong does. Since Hong Kong is only a small island, the news spread very quickly here, and everybody knows about everybody else. You may bump into local heroes and international celebrities such as Jacky Chan, Chow Yut-Fat and John Woo easily.

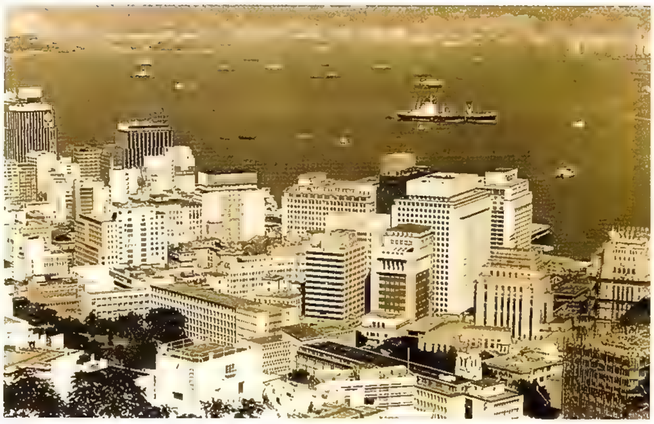
Hong Kong is many things to many people. It is not easy to keep up with the pace of life here, let alone understanding the city itself. However, by contrasting its past and present you may come to appreciate this intriguing place all the more.



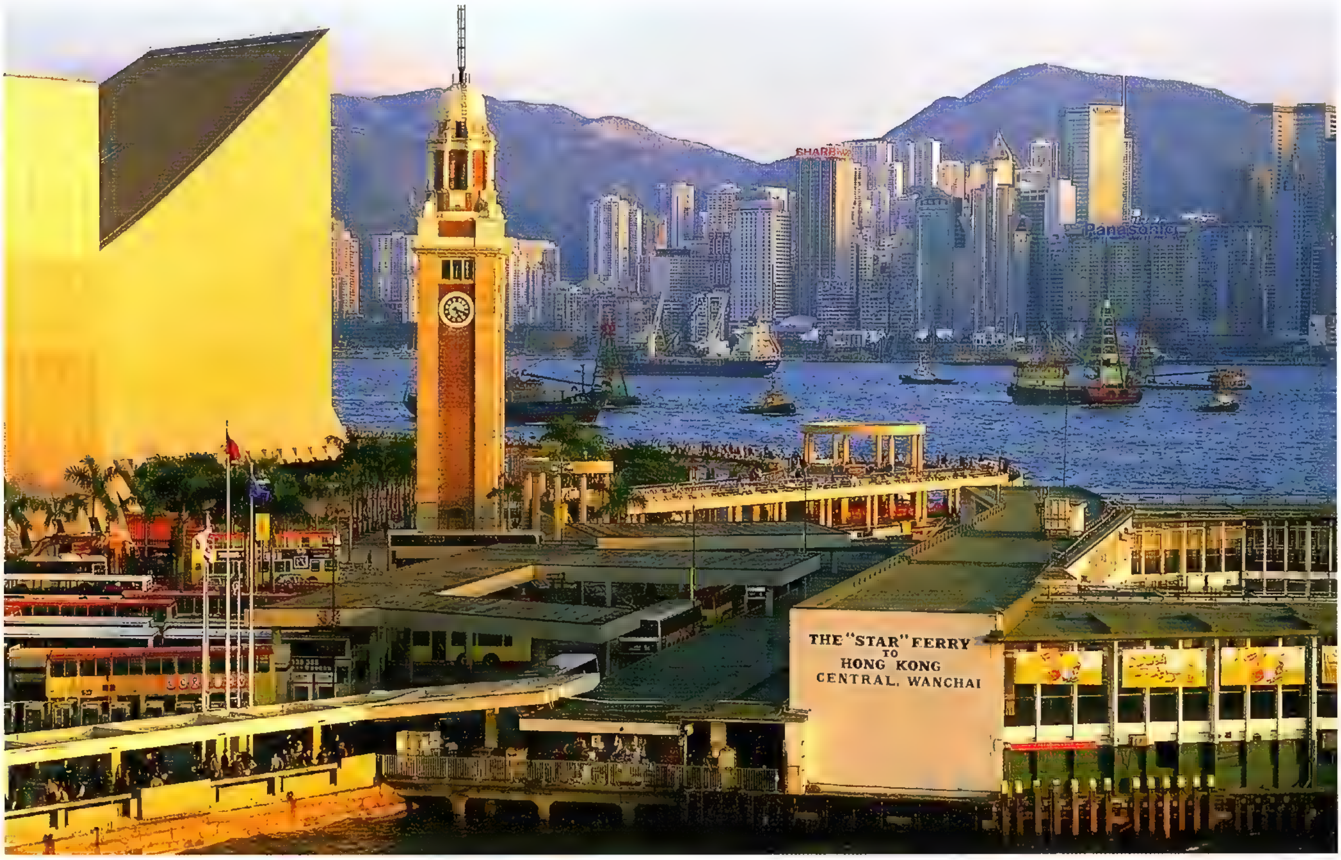
2004 — Central, Hong Kong Island



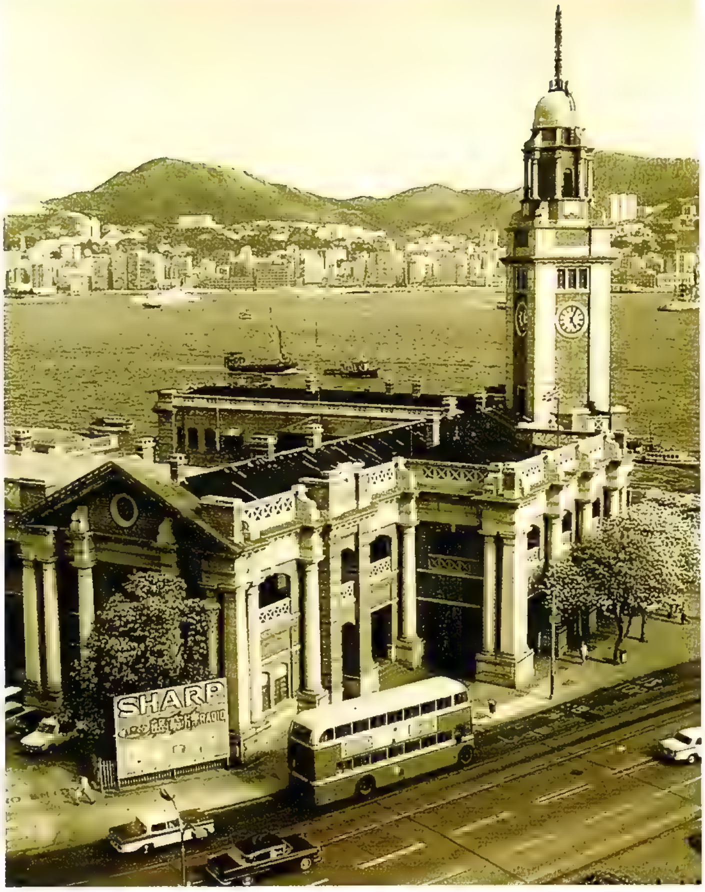
1957



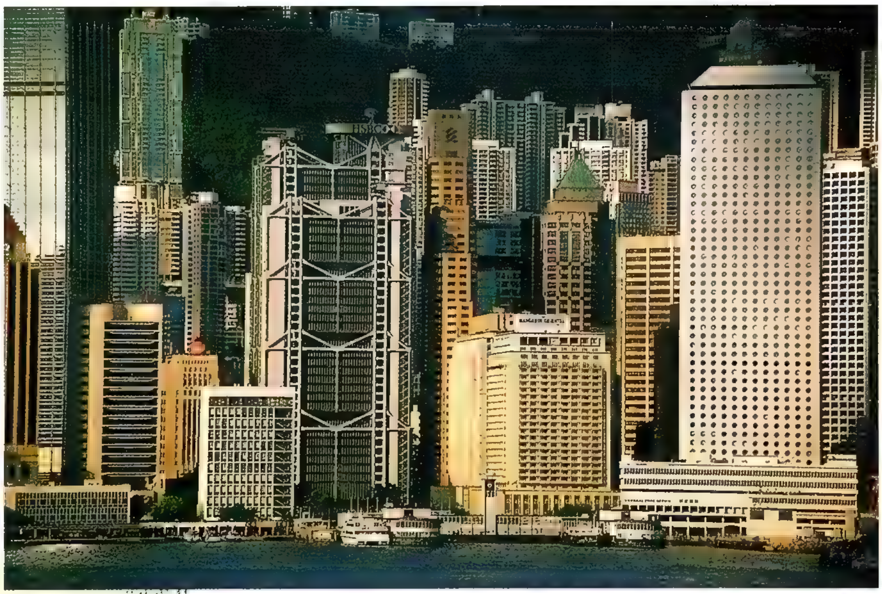
1969


SHARP
Panasonic
THE "STAR" FERRY
TO
HONG KONG
CENTRAL, WANCHAI

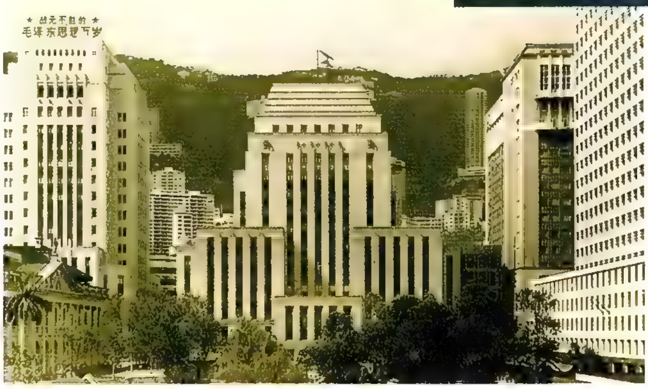
2004 — Clock Tower, Tsim Sha Tsui, Kowloon


SHARP
RADIO

1968



2004 — New HSBC building, Central, HK Island



1971 — Old HSBC building (middle), Central, HK Island

1970

JOYCE
ROLEX
VUITTON

2004 — Nathan Road, Kowloon

2004 — Victoria Harbour

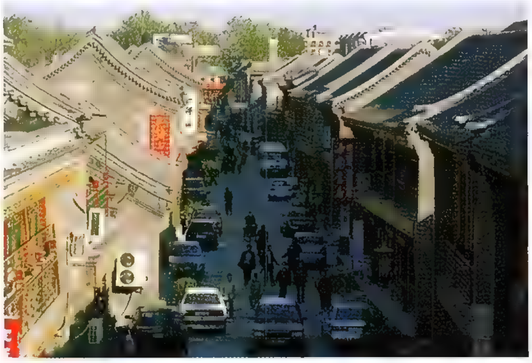
Aberdeen H.K.

1946

1965

BITS AND PIECES OF BEIJING

The venerated Chinese history has strewn the land of Beijing, the capital of China, with sites of cultural and historical interest. Some of them, such as the Great Wall, Imperial Palace, Temple of Heaven, Summer Palace, and the ruins of Peking Man at Zhoukoudian, are UNESCO-endorsed world cultural heritage sites. The Imperial Palace, mansions, gardens and tombs are epitomes of classical Chinese architecture. Among the massive number of ancient buildings that have remained to this day are quite a few Buddhist monasteries, Taoist temples and Catholic churches, such as Yonghegong Lamasery and Big Bell Temple.



Since Beijing is a vast city with numerous attractions, visitors should set enough time to explore. There are 120 museums, including Museum of Chinese History and China Art Gallery, and over 100 gardens within the city.

MAIN ATTRACTIONS

Tian'anmen Square

Large enough to hold 1 million people, the 440,000-m^2 Tian'anmen Square in the centre of Beijing is the world's largest city square, where sunrises and sunsets are observed solemnly with flag ceremonies.

The Monument to the People's Heroes stands in the centre of the square. Behind Zhengyang Gate to the south sprawls Mao Zedong Memorial Hall; to the east is the complex which houses the Museum of Chinese Revolution and the Museum of Chinese History. The Great Hall of the People stands on the west side.

Imperial Palace

The 720,000-m^2 Palace Museum, better known as "Forbidden City", was the palace for the Ming and Qing Dynasty. Built during the 1406-1420, it is the largest royal palatial complex in existence in China. An immense trove of cultural artifacts and treasures of various dynasties, some of them on display in the Treasure Hall and the ceramics, painting, bronze ware galleries, are reason enough for UNESCO to adopt the Imperial Palace as a world cultural heritage site.

Temple of Heaven

China's largest temple and altar are found in Temple of Heaven, part of a 273-ha park in Chongwen District today. Built in 1420, it was where Ming and Qing monarchs prayed for good harvests. Major structures are Hall of Prayer for Good Harvest, Imperial Vault of Heaven, and Circular Altar. UNESCO endorsed Temple of Heaven as a world cultural heritage site in December 1998.

Great Wall

Another UNESCO endorsed world cultural heritage site, the 6350 km Great Wall was in China's feudal years a mammoth defense bulwark that serpentines its way across mountains and valleys in the northern part of the country. The Great Wall came under construction in the 7th century BC. But it was Qinshihuang, the founding emperor of the Qin, who brought it to completion.

Summer Palace

The Summer Palace in the northwestern suburb of Beijing was built in 1750. By far the best-preserved imperial garden in China, it was endorsed by the UNESCO in 1998 as a world cultural heritage site. As a paragon of Chinese gardens, this huge garden includes Longevity Hill, whose beauty is set off by a multitude of halls, kiosks and Kunming Lake. The entire place is a de facto museum of China's classical architecture.

Hutongs

Hutongs are back alleys where old traditions remain very much alive and kicking. There are about 4,550 of them in Beijing, ubiquitous in these hutongs are quadrangle dwellings. Close by prince Gong's Mansion are some of Beijing's best-preserved hutongs. Touring these hutongs by the traditional pedicab is a popular tourist attraction of Beijing.

BITS AND PIECES OF TAIWAN

Taiwan's total land area is only about 3,6000 km^2; it is shaped like a tobacco leaf that is narrow at both ends.

The government has established six national parks and 11 national scenic areas to preserve Taiwan's best natural ecological environment and cultural sites. Take in the splendor and sheer heights of the cliffs at Taroko Gorge; take a ride on the Alishan train — one of only three mountain railways in the world — and experience the breathtaking sunset and sea of clouds; hike up to the summit of Northeast Asia's highest peak, Jade Mountain. You can also soak up the sun in Sun Moon Lake; traipse through the East Rift Valley; or visit the offshore islands of Kinmen and Penghu.

The cultural aspects also not to be missed. The blending of Hakka, Taiwanese, and mainland Chinese cultures has produced a rich plethora of cultural and social color. Whether it is religion, architecture, language, living habits or food, it's just one big exciting melting pot!

MAIN ATTRACTIONS

Sun Moon Lake National Scenic Area

The Sun-Moon Lake, located in the middle of Taiwan, with an elevation of 748 m above sea level, is the only natural lake in Taiwan. The southern part of Kuang-Hua Island is shaped like a new moon, and the northern part is shaped like a sun; hence the name Sun-Moon Lake.

The natural forests bordering these roads are good places for bird watching. There are a lot of birds that live on the mid-elevation, such as the Grey-cheeked Fulvetta, Grap-throated Minivet, Formosan Yuhina, Gray Tree Pie, Bamboo Partridge, Chinese Bulbul, Muller's Barbet and the Black Bulbul.

Besides these birds, fish, wild pigs, raccoons, insects and wild vegetables are flourishing in the region as well.

North Coast Guanyinshan National Scenic Area

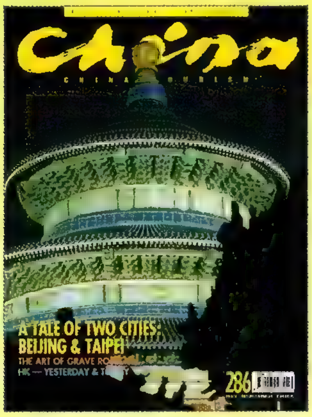
It is located in the northernmost end of Taipei. Billboards advertising a number of popular scenic spots (such as Pak Sha Bay, Shihmen, Jinsan, Yehliu and Green Bay) dot the arterial road to the North Coast, a 60-km Coastal Highway that stretches from Tamshui to Keelung.

It has a variety of tourist attractions; namely the wave erosion caves, hot springs, big gravel beach, seascapes, marine ecology, aquatic resources, rock wonders, hill and farm terraces. The Pak Sha Bay and Jinsan development centres provide a series of facilities for the recreational needs of the northern region; such as sea fishing, swimming, hiking, camping, sea-bathing, hang gliding, sightseeing, water sports, etc.

Alishan Forest Recreation Area

Alishan is the most famous scenic spot which is formed by Dawu Mountain range, Jian Mountain, Zhu Mountain and Ta Mountain. There are 18 large mountains, stretching from Nantou to Jiayi in two counties. It takes four hours by mountaineering train from Jiayi County to reach Alishan scenic spot. The highest peak is 2660 m above sea level. The mountain is well known to the whole world for its four beautiful scenes of mystical tree, oriental cherry, and a sea of clouds and sunrise.

Every tourist for Alishan is interested in witnessing the majestic view of "Mystical Tree of Alishan". On the east side of the Mystical Tree Railway Station of the main Peak of Alishan, there stands a sturdy towering tree slightly slant. Although the main trunk is broken, yet the branches on the top are green and verdant. The tree is about 52 m high and the diameter is about 23 m; it is estimated that its high age is 3000 odd years, a king tree in Asia.



Readership Survey

China Tourism always appreciates feedback from its readers. In accordance with your suggestions, we have recently added a variety of new columns. Still, we need to know more of your opinions, including criticisms and suggestions. Please take a couple of minutes to complete this questionnaire and return it to us. Thank you!

Please give your evaluation of the stories in this issue and your overall impression of *China Tourism*.

	Excellent	Good	Average	Fair	Poor
A Tale of Two Cities: Beijing & Taipei	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Huping Mountain — The Roof of Hunan	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The Art of Grave Robbery	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Pools of Joy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
How to Take Picture-Postcard Shots?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Others:	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	Excellent	Good	Average	Fair	Poor
Photographs	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Cover	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Articles	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Travel Tips	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Art Design	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Other Opinions: ____________________

____

Name: (Mr./Ms./Mrs.) ____________________
Address: ____________________
____________________ Country: ____________________
Age: __________ Occupation: __________ Number of trips to China in the last 5 years: __________

Where (how) did you first see *China Tourism*?

☐ Subscription ☐ Newsstand or bookstore
☐ Hotel Name: ____________________ ☐ Others ____________________

Main purpose for reading *China Tourism*?

☐ Planning trips ☐ General interest in China's customs, scenery, etc. ☐ Business
☐ Tourist Trade purposes ☐ Others ____________________

What do you like most about *China Tourism*?

____

Are you happy with the factual content of *China Tourism*? ☐ Yes ☐ No

What are your suggestions for improvement?

____

Thank you for taking the time to fill in this questionnaire. It provides us with invaluable feedback which will help us improve *China Tourism* magazine for you.

*Please mail this questionnaire to our office at 24/F, Westlands Centre, 20 Westlands Road, Quarry Bay, Hong Kong, or fax to (852) 2561 8196.

HIGHLIGHTS OF ISSUE NO. 287

Feature Story: Yunnan's Trio of Rivers in Parallel

Most rivers in China run west to east with the exceptions of three. This trio of rivers, namely Jinsha River, Lancang River and Nu River, is originated from the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, and it runs roughly parallel from north to south for about 200 km.

The two million hectares of land these three rivers covered makes up one of the world's richest biodiversity areas. This unique landscape encompasses numerous natural habitats for rare and endangered plants and animals.

On the Way: The Mountain of Hollow Caves

The Kongtong Mountain, located west of the city of Pingliang, Gansu Province, is where Taoism originated. This mountain boasts a lot of temples and palaces, among other sites of interests.

In the first month of spring I climbed solo and began my adventure at the back slope of Mt. Kongtong. From time to time I saw deep and secluded caves, and my footsteps echoed dully against the mountain. It struck me that Mt. Kongtong has a hollow centre as its name "Kong (hollow) Tong (cave)" suggests!

Culture: Stories told by Shadow Puppets

The shadow puppet show or leather silhouette play is a traditional art form of Chinese drama.

Legend has it that Emperor Wudi (156-87 B.C.) was depressed about the death of his favourite concubine. To help him get over the sadness, an occultist sculptured a wooden figure in the likeness of the lady and projected its shadow on a curtain for the emperor to see, reassuring him that the shadow was her spirit. Nobody can be certain if this legend tells us the origin of shadow puppet show, only that this art form has continued to win the hearts of many even after two thousand years.

Nature: The Birthplace of Sandstorms — Ejin River

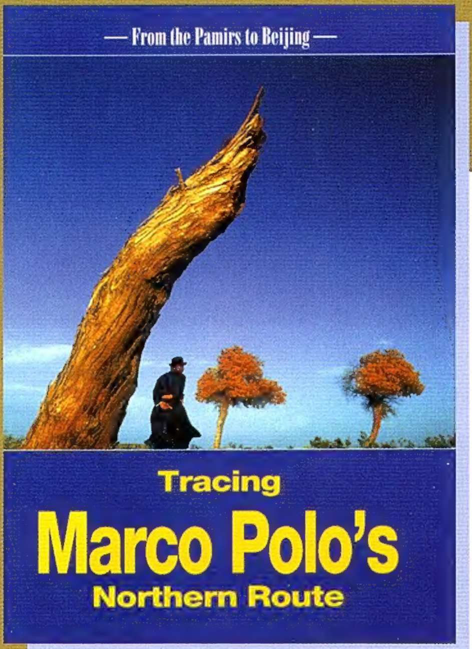
Water is the magic source of life, for it has the power to bring the deadliest place alive.

Take, for instance, Ejin River that flows to the Inner Mongolia in the north. This river passes through various Gobi Deserts despite terrible climates, irrigates many fields and prospers the lands. As a result, it created the brilliant history for the Heicheng City.

Regrettably, the rapid increase of soil erosion and severe damage of ecosystem by mankind have drying up the Ejin River, causing huge sandstorms that threaten the Beijing City and its neighbouring areas.

Photographic & Practical Guides for Your China Tours

Before you set off for your perfect journey, you may have to prepare your itinerary carefully. Each of the following recommended readings offers different types of information which cater to our readers' various interests: exploring, photography, or tourist information. They will be great guides to your China tours.



Tracing Marco Polo's Northern Route

A record of an 80-day journey in which our authors drive their jeep 12,000 km long through the northern regions of China following in the footsteps of Macro Polo's historic journey from the Pamir Highland to Beijing. In a medley of images and words, we present you with the fascinating scenery and various ways of life in Xinjiang, Qinghai, Gansu, Ningxia, Inner Mongolia, and Tibet.

HK$156

In Search of the Ancient Tea Caravan Route

The ancient Tea Caravan Route can be traced back to 2,000 years ago, starting from Xishuangbanna at China's southwestern end, passing through boundless forests and valleys to the Sino-Indian, Nepalese and Sikkimese borders on Tibet, the "Roof of the World". This book is not-to-be-missed by every daring adventurer.

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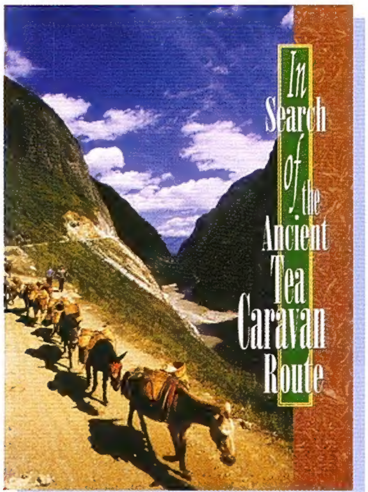

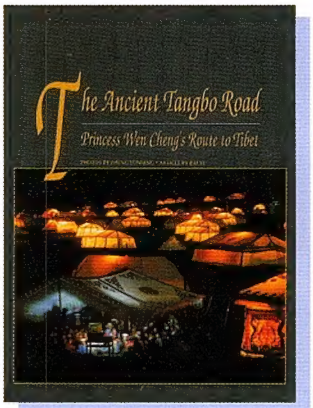

The Ancient Tangbo Road

Covering four provinces including Shaanxi, Gansu, Qinghai, and the Tibet Autonomous Region, the ancient Tangbo Road was created on the map when Princess Wen Cheng was sent as a bride to Luoxie (present-day Lhasa) during the Tang Dynasty. Our photographers and writers, who have followed this arduous route, present you the graceful sights and unique ethnic customs on the way.

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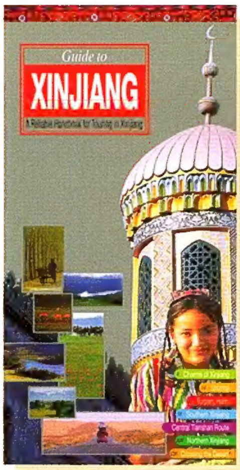
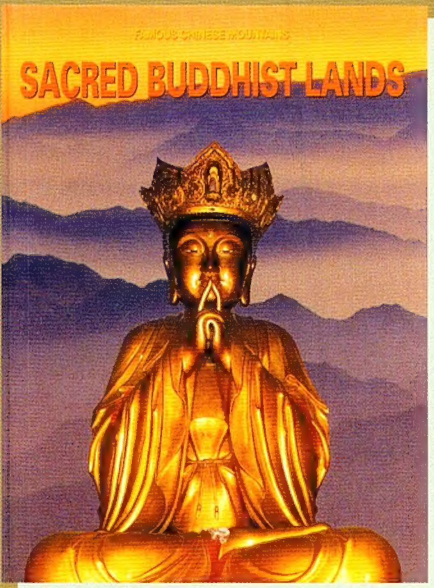


Guide to Xinjiang

This book is especially designated for DIY travellers who desire to explore the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. There are detailed introduction to scenic spots in five main areas in Xinjiang including Urümqi, Turpan, Southern and Northern Xinjiang, and Central Tianshan. Practical tourist information on accommodation, ticketing, shopping, local specialty, as well as travel tips are covered.

HK$96



Sacred Buddhist Lands

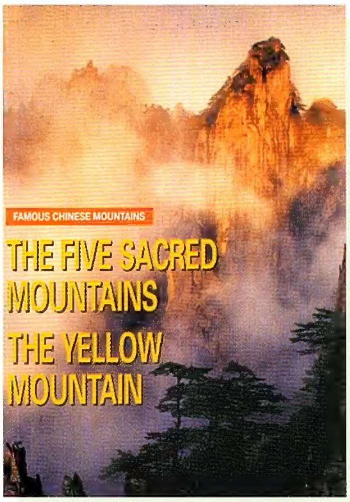
Buddhism in China is inevitably linked with some of the country's best known mountains. And going deep in the mountains and far away from civilization is an ideal place for retreat. Belonging to the four Bodhisattvas respectively, the four most famous Buddhist mountains — Wutai, Jiuhua, Putuo and Emei — are nestled with numerous monasteries and nunneries which have been worshipped by pilgrims for thousands of years. Tourists to these places will totally be soaked in "Kingdoms of Buddhism".

HK$156

The Five Sacred Mountains
The Yellow Mountain

Located in five provinces in China, every of the Five Sacred Mountains — Taishan, Hengshan, Songshan, Hengshan and Huashan — has its magnificent natural and cultural landscapes. Besides, Huangshan (Yellow Mountain), is also famous for its spectacular rocks, pine trees, and sea of clouds. It will be a great enjoyment in reading both the detailed text and remarkable images by our experienced photographers as recorded in this book.

HK$156



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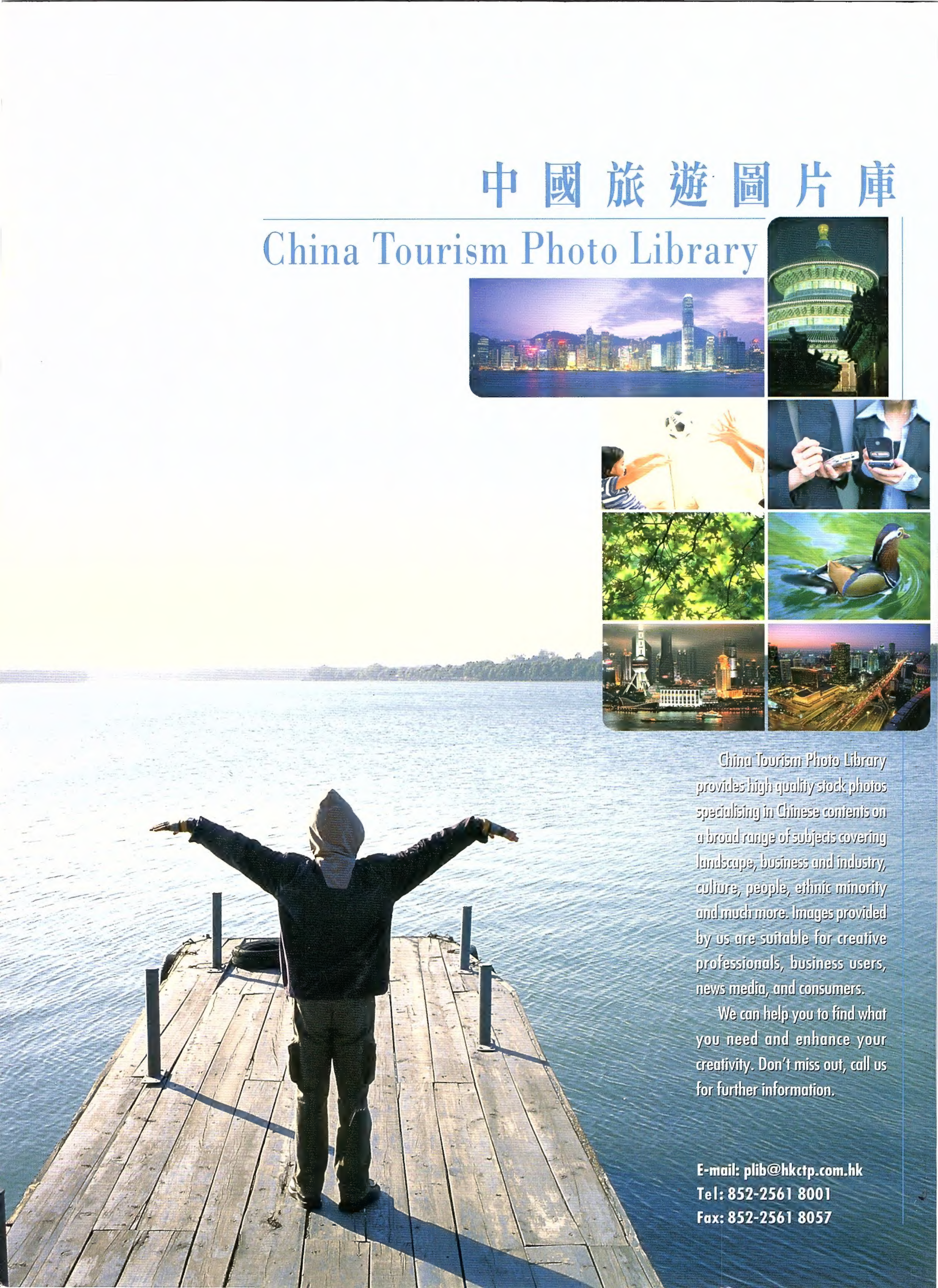

中國旅遊圖片庫

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China Tourism Photo Library provides high quality stock photos specialising in Chinese contents on a broad range of subjects covering landscape, business and industry, culture, people, ethnic minority and much more. Images provided by us are suitable for creative professionals, business users, news media, and consumers.

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